Collision by BCI603, milevenreddie

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Genre: El and Eddie end up as bffs, F/M, Halfway completed already ha, I'm horrible with tags don't @ me, M/M, Mike & Richie are twins, Pennywise home is gone, i'm shit at chapter titles idk why i chose to do them #sorrynotsorry, strangerthings/it crossover, tags will probably be added as we go along, the party and the losers club fight IT
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Summary:

Bev is excited to introduce all her Loser Club friends to her friends in Hawkins, hoping for them to have a successful trip and a good summer. But things don't go to plan when an unwelcome being shows up as well. A being the Loser Club thought they had seen the last of...

1. Introduction

Author's Note:

> Hopefully updating daily! (Already have 23 chapters done so expect an update at some point everyday) Chapter number may change, depending on how it goes!

After the events that took place in 1985, the losers club became closer, but drifted apart as their high school careers ended and began attending college. They still called each other on the phone every once in awhile, but the conversations never lasted long. They wrote letters sometimes, but those eventually ended. They all missed each other, being in different states, but rarely got together, even when they were all home.

Bill Denbrough, also known as Stuttering Bill when he was younger, didn't quite stutter as much anymore, unless he's stressed or angry. He's taking English, professional writing, journalism and creative writing and his professors kept him on his toes.

Eddie Kaspbrak is still the hypochondriac everyone knew him for when they were younger. He's studying to become a Pharmacist, and is taking chemistry, biology, anatomy, physiology, advanced math and English, which kept him incredibly busy. Even too busy for his best friend and boyfriend, Richie.

Richie Tozier, the trashmouth of the losers club. Although he's hilarious, he's still a trashmouth that has no filter whatsoever. He's one out of the group who isn't attending college, and is currently making a name for himself in the small town of Derry, Maine, as a comedian/singer. His raunchy jokes and gross puns held a special place in many people's hearts nowadays. He's had a few gigs with his band, named Trashmouth, of course, and is a very talented singer.

Mike Hanlon, another who doesn't attend college, has been working at the library since he was sixteen. Now, at 22 years old, he's possibly one of the most favorited librarians to work there in the last few

years. Though he's known as the Lucky Seven to some of the losers club, he's also almost like the glue, as he would always try and get everyone together for a little reunion of some sorts when everyone was in town.

Ben Hanscom, the boy who used to be picked on because of his weight, has become taller and slimmer. When the losers club began attending high school, he became obsessed with architecture and is taking architectural courses along with English, Laboratory Science, and Mathematics. Because of his fascination with old buildings and history in general, he works alongside Mike at the library when he's in town.

Stanley Uris, the mature one out of the losers club, who disagreed with just about anything that was possibly dangerous. Known as Stan or Stan the man by Richie and Bill, Stan were the closest with the two. He's taking multiple math classes, such as algebra, geometry and calculus to become an accountant. He's helping his father out with the church.

Last but not least, Beverly Marsh, the only girl in the losers club, mostly known as Bev or Bevvy. After the events of 1985, Bev moved away from Derry to live with her Aunt and cousin, Maryanne and Elizabeth Hively in Hawkins, Indiana. She shared a kiss with Bill before leaving Derry, and the two were a not so official couple, even seven years later, but wrote each other and called each other all the time to talk. She doesn't attend college, but she loves fashion and wants to attend college in the future. When she moved to Hawkins and started school in 1985, she met a lively bunch of teens who had also been through a lot the last two years.

After the events of 1984, when Eleven closed the gate and the lab was shut down, everything went back to normal. Or as normal as things could get. After high school, half of the kids began attending college, and the other's did different things, but always stayed in touch, no matter what.

Jane Hopper, known as Eleven because of her tattoo, also known as

just El. El ended up beginning school a year later, in the middle of the teens freshman year, and absolutely loved it. She and Mike were together, and that made it even better. They graduated, and at 18, she got a job working at the police station, filing paperwork, taking calls, and multiple other things. It was boring most of the time, but she loved it anyways. She and Bev were fast friends, right along with Max.

Michael Wheeler, usually known as Mike, little brother of Nancy and older brother of Holly. He's the leader of the group, and he reminded her of Bill in that sense. He most definitely reminded her of Richie, the two looked identical, other than they had different fashion senses, Richie has glasses, and Mike was nowhere near as much of a potty mouth as Richie. As first, she was skeptical about him because it freaked her out so much, but he ended up being a sweetheart. When they graduated, he almost immediately began training and is now working alongside Hopper at the police station.

Dustin Henderson, the jokester of the group, still wears the same hat from when he was in middle school. He's grown taller, and beefed up. Known as toothless by their middle school bullies, he's grown quite the set of pearls. He's also Steve Harrington's best friend. As of right now, he's taking multiple classes, such as; biology, chemistry, organic chemistry, biochemistry, to be a veterinarian, and those are only for the first two years, him beginning his third in the fall. He'll then take physics, microbiology, anatomy and physiology, math, animal science, and more, and that's just preparing for veterinary school. When Bev met him, she thought he had a mix of Richie, because of his potty mouth, and Ben, because of his fascination with history and love of animals.

Will Byers, he's the quiet one, intelligent, known as Will the Wise by most of his friends because of their love for Dungeons & Dragons. He's Jonathan's little brother. When he and Bev met, she could tell the teen had been through a lot in his short life, but admired him for it. He's an insanely talented artist, and is currently taking classes to be an art teacher. He's earning his bachelor's degree, and completing a teacher education program. He seems like a mix of Eddie, Stanley, and Bill, but only a little on Eddie's part.

Lucas Sinclair, the mature, more thoughtful one of the group. Although he does his best to do the right thing and stay out of trouble, over the last few years he and his friends have gotten themselves into interesting situations, but always managed to get them back out of it. He's taking classes to become an Biology teacher, working on earning his bachelor's degree as well, and working on completing a teacher's education program, much like Will's.

Maxine Mayfield, only known as Max, the fiery red head of the group. She doesn't go to college, though she might in the future. She and Lucas have been together officially since the summer of 1985, considering the two were both too scared to admit their feelings to each other. She works at the arcade as the manager, and loves seeing all the excited kids come and play games. She and Bev are sometimes mistaken for sisters or even twins, mainly because of the fact that they both have red hair and freckles, but they think it's hilarious.

2. The First Encounter

Friday, May 18, 1992
Hawkins, Indiana

It's a quiet, sunny day, as it usually is in the small town. Everything seemed peaceful, but for a brother and sister, it isn't.

"Did you seriously have to get in a fight on the last day of school, Holly?" Mike demanded, glancing at his twelve year old sister. She just grumbled to herself. "Cat got your tongue? You're only twelve, Holly, what the hell are you doing getting in fights?"

"Like you've never got in a fight at school before!"

"Yeah, one time, and that was in high school! You're lucky that it's the last day of school, and the school called me instead of mom or dad." She just huffed and crossed her arms, and looked out the window. He sighed and shook his head. It was quiet for a few minutes and she asked quietly,

"Do you hate me now?" He looked at her, a surprised look on his face.

"Hate you? No, no, I don't hate you, Holly. I would never hate you for getting in a fight. I could never hate my baby sister, at all. I'm just worried is all." He said, ruffling her blonde hair. "I'm not mad, either, I'm disappointed. You threw the first punch, and what have I taught you?" She mumbled something. "What? I can't hear you."

"You said to never throw the first punch. To wait for someone else too."

"That's right. That'll make it self defense and you won't get in as much trouble." She giggled.

"You're a police officer and telling me this." She said. He chuckled and nodded.

"Don't tell Hop, he'll kill me." She giggled again and nodded.

"Hey, Wheeler, are you there? Over." Hopper's voice came on over the radio. He pressed the button and answered,

"Yeah, I'm here, Hop. Over."

"Can you go out in the woods near Dustin's house and see if you can find his mom's cat? She won't stop calling up here and it's driving Flo crazy. I don't know why she can't go out and look for it herself. Over." Mike rolled his eyes. That woman was too much of a cat lady and it's ridiculous. Holly laughed quietly.

"Yes sir, I'll be right on it. Over and out." He looked at Holly and the two started laughing. "Well, you want to go cat hunting with me? Then we'll go get ice cream." She nodded excitedly. He took a left and headed towards Dustin's.

"Wait, why can't Dustin go out and look?" She asked.

"He won't be home until tomorrow." He responded. "His flight was delayed or something. Same with Lucas and Will."

"Oh." The rest of the ride was fairly quiet, other than the music playing. When they arrived, Mike let Dustin's mom know they were there and are going to go out looking for the cat.

"What's its name?" Holly asked.

"I have no idea. Just like, yell kitty or something I guess." He said. She rolled her eyes and nodded. They each had a toy to try and lure it to them if they found it. They walked around together for a few minutes, looking around, until Mike said, "You go kind of over that way to look, but stay where you can see me, okay?" She nodded and went to the right.

They walked around, Holly eventually losing sight of him, but he could sort of see her, so he thought it would be fine. She heard a twig snap, and looked around. She saw someone standing behind a tree,

holding a red balloon out. He stuck his head out, a creepy grin on his face. She stayed a good couple of feet away from him. He was dressed as a clown, and she hated them.

"Hiya there, Holly! Do you want a balloon?"

"Uh, no thanks. I don't take anything from people I don't know."

"Oh come on now! Not even a balloon?" She shook her head.

"How do you know my name?"

"I've heard many great things about you." The grin on his face was beginning to be even creepier, if that was possible.

"Holly!" She heard Mike yell. She heard his footsteps coming towards her and she walked backwards to meet him. "Who the fuck are you?" He put an arm around Holly and kind of put her behind him. He just stared at the two, the grin never leaving his face. He had slobber dripping down his chin. "Go the fuck away, you creep. Leave my sister alone. Come on." As they were about to walk around, the cat came running up to them, and Mike heard a quiet, but clear,

"Beep beep, Richie." When they looked back to where the clown was, he was gone, and the balloon popped. Mike's heard someone say that before, beep beep Richie, but he couldn't remember who. He picked the cat up and gave it to Holly, and put an arm around her, keeping a hand on his gun as they walked back towards Dustin's house. They quickly gave the cat to Dustin's mom and left, giving her an excuse as to why they had to leave so fast.

"Did he try and touch you or anything?" Mike asked as they drove down the road. She shook her head.

"No. He tried to give me a balloon. He knew my name."

"You didn't tell him?" She shook her head again. "What the hell?"

"I don't know but it creeped me out."

"Yeah, me too. Just make sure you're with someone from now on, okay? And if you see him again, let me know and I'll arrest the nasty fu-" He stopped himself, hating cursing in front of her. "I'm sorry."

"It's okay. You said it twice to the...thing."

"I'm sorry about that too."

"Again, it's okay. You're an adult, you're allowed to say stuff like that. It's nothing compared to Dustin though." He chuckled and ruffled her hair.

"Since when did you get so smart?" She giggled and shrugged.

"For a couple years now, I guess." He laughed at that and pulled into the ice cream shop. They went inside, Mike keeping an eye on just about everything going on around them. She got plain chocolate ice cream and he got vanilla with a bunch of chocolate toppings. "That makes no sense, Mike. Why don't you just get chocolate like me?" He made a face at her.

"This is completely different." He argued.

"How?"

"Because these are toppings, and I love the toppings. M&M's, chocolate chips, chocolate shavings, all that is amazing. Chocolate ice cream is just... plain ice cream." She stuck her tongue out at him.

"You are such a weirdo."

"But I'm your favorite weirdo, right?" She rolled her eyes but grinned and nodded. When he pulled up in the driveway of his old house, she asked,

"Can I spend the night with you and El this weekend?"

"If mom says you can, yeah." She grinned excitedly and hopped out, leaving her book bag. He shook his head and grabbed it, getting out of the car and following her inside.

"Hey mom!" Mike called.

"Michael! Long time no see, Mister." She put her hands on her hips, giving him a look. He rolled his eyes playfully.

"It's only been a week since I last saw you mom. And I've called you like three times this week."

"I still have to get used to you not being here all the time." She said, holding her arms out to hug him. He chuckled and hugged her. He's about a foot taller than her now.

"I've been moved out for six months mom." He said.

"I know. Anyways, do you want some cookies to take to El and Jim?" She asked. He mocked being hurt.

"What about me?" She rolled her eyes and sighed, pretending to think about it.

"I guess you can have some too." He grinned and plucked one off the table.

"Can I stay with him and El this weekend?" Holly asked, coming from the living room.

"As long as it's okay with them, I don't mind." She grinned excitedly and nodded, running up the stairs to go and get her stuff together. She sat at the table with Mike, who was on his third cookie already. "You're gonna get fat."

"Apparently I need to anyway, I'm too skinny according to El." He said with a mouthful. She chuckled. She grabbed the plate after he grabbed a fourth one and took it to the counter, laughing as he pouted. She put them in a container and put the lid on it, putting it back in front of him. When he finished the cookie, he made sure that Holly wasn't coming down the stairs and told Karen,

"Hey, uh, if you see this creepy ass guy in a clown suit, anywhere,

call me, okay?"

"What, why?" He explained to her what happened in the woods.

"He knew her name? Are you sure she didn't tell him?"

"I doubt she would have told him. She said that's the first thing he said to her. And he was *so* creepy."

"Hm, well, I'll keep a lookout around here and anywhere I go. I'm not to fond of clowns either, let alone some pedophile dressed up as one." She said. He nodded in agreement.

"He said something else before he just...disappeared. I don't know what it meant."

"What was it?" She asked.

"Beep beep Richie." He shrugged. "I don't know. It was weird." She nodded. He didn't notice the look in her eyes, that went away as quickly as it came.

"Yeah, no kidding."

"Okay, I'm ready!" Holly exclaimed, almost falling down the stairs. Mike snorted and nodded. The two hugged Karen goodbye and left to go to the police station.

3. The Quest for Groceries

Later that night, after El and Mike got off work, they took Holly out to eat and then to see a movie, and were now back at their house. It was a cute little house, not really little, considering it's two stories, has three bedrooms, two bathrooms, a basement, and a half bathroom in the basement. They both made pretty good money at the station, so they could easily afford it.

"I'm surprised she's already asleep." El said, snuggling into Mike's side on their couch.

"I know, usually she's still awake. It's only ten."

"I guess with everything that's gone on today's made her tired." She said. He'd told her about the clown incident, not in too much detail, and left the *beep beep Richie* part out. He nodded in agreement.

"Yeah, it was creepy as hell. And the way he disappeared...it just isn't normal." He shivered, just thinking about it. She put an arm around his stomach, putting her head on his chest.

"Well, hopefully it won't happen again, and if it does, you can just arrest him." She said. He chuckled and nodded, kissing the top of her head. "You excited for everyone to come home tomorrow?" She asked. He nodded.

"Yeah, it feels like forever since we've seen them. It's been forever since we were all together." He said, playing with a strand of her long, wavy hair.

"It has been. Almost a year."

"Damn, it's gone by so fast."

"I know."

"I wonder if Dustin's finally cut his hair."

"I doubt it." She giggled. "He loves it too much. He said it's his best feature, other than his *pearls* as he calls them." Mike snorted but

nodded.

"Yeah, he wouldn't look like Dustin without the curly hair. And that damn hat." He shook his head and she laughed.

"Hey, I'm surprised he hasn't lost the damn thing yet."

"True."

"You know, you wouldn't look like you without all that curly hair." She reached up and ran her hands through it. "Just be glad it's not *as* curly as his."

"No kidding. It'd be even more of a pain in the ass." She giggled. They stayed up for another hour or so before retreating to their bedroom, where they continued talking until El fell asleep, Mike's arms wrapped around her comfortingly. It took him a while to go to sleep, as he tried racking his brain, trying to remember where he heard *beep beep Richie,* from, but he still couldn't quite put his finger on it.

Saturday, May 19, 1992

"Babe, wake up." Mike felt El lightly shaking his shoulder. One eye popped open and he looked at her. She giggled.

"What?" He mumbled.

"We've got to go to the grocery store. We basically have no food right now." He groaned and pushed his face into the pillow. She laughed. She lightly tugged on a curl. "In all seriousness though, we do need to go to the store. I'm making dinner for everyone tonight, remember." he groaned again but sat up on his arms.

"Why must you always want to cook big meals?" He asked dramatically. She rolled her eyes.

"Because I love cooking just as much as you love shooting stuff and cursing." He tilted his head slightly and nodded.

"Fair point." He rolled over and sat up, scratching his head. He looked at the clock and saw that it's 9 AM. "Is Holly up?" He asked, grabbing

his shirt off the floor and putting it on. She nodded.

"She's watching TV. We're both ready to go so when you're ready, we're gonna go get breakfast then to the grocery store." He nodded and pecked her on the lips. She grinned at him. She went downstairs while he got up. He brushed his teeth and attempted to do something with his hair, to no avail, and then got dressed. He put on a black and white striped t-shirt and shorts. He grabbed his wallet, put his shoes on, and joined his girlfriend and little sister downstairs.

"Ready?" El asked. He nodded. As they got in the car, he locked the door and then joined them.

"Is Bev working today?" Holly asked.

"Uh, I don't know. She usually works on Saturday, right?" Mike asked El, who nodded.

"She's probably there." Holly nodded, a smile on her face as she looked down at one of Mike's old comics. Mike turned the radio up some and he and El embarrassed themselves by dancing wildly at a stop light. Holly just rolled her eyes at them. They got breakfast, obviously getting waffles, and after, they went to the store, where they saw Bev talking on her phone, on her break.

"It's only, "Mike looked at his watch, "10:30, why are you on a break already?" He joked she rolled her eyes.

"I've been here since 5 so, yeah."

"Who are you talking to?" Holly asked innocently, already knowing who she was talking to.

"Bill." She answered, putting it against her shoulder so he wouldn't hear. El wiggled her eyebrows and Bev laughed. "I'm almost done, I'll come find you guys then." The three nodded and went on their way.

"What are you cooking?" Mike asked.

"Spaghetti." She said, hardly paying attention as she looked down each aisle.

"Awesome." He high fived Holly and El smiled to herself.

"Why don't you two go and get another cart and get all of the stuff on this list." She handed Mike the list. He raised an eyebrow, wondering why she had two lists. "What? Mike, we have no food or drinks. I want to stock up because it's annoying when I wake up in the middle of the night, starving and there's no food." He chuckled and nodded, saluting her before walking off with Holly to get another cart. Bev jogged up to her and grinned widely, for no apparent reason.

"What are you all smiley about?" El asked, looking at her.

"I may have just convinced Bill to come here for the summer." She said happily.

"Really? Awesome!"

"Yeah! I haven't seen any of them face to face in five years now. He's going to try and convince the others to come as well. My aunt said she'd pay for them all too." Her aunt was pretty wealthy, probably more so than anyone else in Hawkins.

"Awesome! I'd love to meet them all."

"You'd love them. They're just as insane together as Mike, Will, Lucas, and Dustin are." El chuckled.

"I believe it. Are you and Elizabeth coming over tonight?"

"Oh hell yeah. If you're making spaghetti, I'm all for it."

"Great! I need to have a little girl time tonight. I love Holly, but I can't talk about certain things with her, you know?" Bev laughed and nodded. Then her eyes widened.

"Are you pregnant?" She whispered.

"No! I'm not pregnant!" She exclaimed, almost too loudly. Bev snorted.

"Okay, okay, I'm sorry. But just imagine how cute you and Mike's kids will be!" El rolled her eyes.

"We're not even married yet, Bev."

"Then hurry the hell up and get married! You've been together six years. I wonder if he's ever gonna get the balls to propose to you." El rolled her eyes again.

"If he doesn't soon, I'll be the one to ask him." Bev giggled.

"Please do, I will pay to see that."

"I would do it too.

"I believe it. Okay well, I better get back to work and let you go on your quest for buying groceries. I'll see you up front." El laughed and nodded.

4. Proposal

"You got everything?" El asked the brother and sister an hour later.

"I think so." Both cart's were just about filled.

"Okay, it looks like you do, plus a few other things." She gave them a knowing look and they giggled. They went to Bev's register and talked to her as she rung their stuff up, and then left the store whilst Holly complained about her feet hurting. Once they got back home, Holly went upstairs to take a shower while Mike and El put the grocery's up.

"You know what Bev told me?" El said as she put ice cream in the freezer.

"What?"

"That she's convinced Bill to come out here for the summer. And that he's going to try and convince all of her friends from Derry to come too."

"Really? That's nice. I need to meet this guy who looks like me." He said. She laughed. "What was his name again?"

"I don't remember. I know it starts with an *R*." She replied.

"Hm."

"What's up with you?" She said as she turned around, seeing as he'd been pretty quiet for a couple of minutes. "You've been quiet-Oh." He was down on one knee behind her. "Mike?"

"I planned this in my head completely different, I didn't think I'd be doing this in the kitchen putting groceries up, but I am. El," She covered her mouth with her hands, tears already forming, "I love you so much, and I'll never love another woman. Loving you is the *best* thing that's ever happened to me. We've been together, *officially*, for seven and a half years now, and I hope to be together for even longer." He pulled the box out of his pocket and held it up to her. "Will you marry me?"

"God I love you. Yes!" She exclaimed doing a little happy dance. He grinned widely and put the ring on her finger. It's just a simple diamond on a golden band, nothing fancy, and she loves it. He stood up and hugged her tightly. He pulled back a little bit and kissed her. They would have kissed longer if a disgusted voice hadn't said,

"Ew! Ya nasty people!" Holly made a face at them and the two rolled their eyes. They let each other go and El wiped under her eyes. "Wait, why are you crying?" She asked, looking at them confused. El looked at Mike, who grinned and nodded. El held her hand up for her to see the ring. Holly gasped and rushed over to her to look at it. "Oh my gosh! Yay!" She squealed and almost knocked El over to hug her. El laughed and hugged her back.

"Hey, what about me?" Mike asked, pretending to cry. The girls giggled and Holly hugged him just as tight as she did El.

"I get another sister!" She exclaimed excitedly. Mike grinned at that.

"Do you think it'd be too much to invite your parents and mine over too?" El asked. He raised an eyebrow at her as he cut up some onions. "So we can tell them we're engaged. Unless you'd rather wait, that's fine."

"No, no, I want to tell them that I'm going to be marrying the most beautiful girl in the world." He said, walking over to her and wrapping his arms around her from behind. She grinned at him and kissed his cheek. "I'll go call them while you do this."

"Thank you baby." She smiled at him and he smiled back as he went to go call his mom and then Hopper. Holly walked passed him, the two giving each other a weird look.

"Can I help?" Holly asked.

"That depends, are you scared of getting your hands dirty?" Holly giggled and shook her head. "Can you put all the hamburger meat in that frying pan please?" Holly nodded. She washed her hands and then put the whole pack in the huge frying pan. She washed her hands again and looked at El for more directions. "Here," She handed

her a spatula, "Just stab at it until it's broken apart and not all stuck together like a big burger." Holly nodded and did as she was told.

"Mike!" El yelled.

"What?" He yelled back.

"What time is it?" A couple seconds later he responded.

"5:30!"

"Thank you!"

"You're welcome!"

"You two yell too much." Holly said. El laughed.

"It's a normal thing here, you outta know that."

"True."

At exactly 6:30, there was a knock on the door. Mike grinned at El, who was still in the kitchen cooking, and went to open the door.

"My dude!" Mike had hardly opened the door before he was tackled in a hug by Dustin, followed by Lucas, who almost knocked the two men to the floor. Mike laughed and hugged the two of them. "How are you doing man?" Dustin asked, as Lucas asked,

"Where's El?"

"I'm right here, *Lukey*!" She said, walking in the living room. He rolled his eyes at the name and hugged her, and was then pushed aside by Dustin, who picked her up off the floor in a huge bear hug. She laughed and hugged him back. When he finally let go, he looked around.

"Nice place you got here." He said, nodding as if agreeing with himself. She shook her head at him, a smile on her face. "Hey! Little Wheeler's here too!" He said, noticing Holly on the couch. She squeaked as he hugged her, but giggled when he tickled her. Lucas

hugged her too, rustling her hair like Mike does.

"Where's ole Will the Wise?" Lucas asked, sitting on the couch.

"He, Hopper, and Joyce will probably be here in a few minutes." Mike answered. A few minutes later, there was a knock on the door, and it was them, plus Karen and Ted.

"Willy!" Dustin exclaimed, pulling the shorter boy in for a hug. Will laughed but hugged him back. Lucas hugged him next as Dustin went on to hug the parents, Lucas following him after hugging Will.

"What's up man? How ya doing?" Mike asked as he hugged Will.

"I'm good! Tired, but good. I'll be glad to get home and sleep for the rest of the weekend." Mike chuckled and nodded. After Mike and El greeted everyone, El went back in the kitchen, followed by Karen and Joyce, while they boys stayed in the living room with Holly.

"Where's Max?" Mike asked. "I figured she'd have come with you two." He said, gesturing to Dustin and Lucas.

"She's coming with Elizabeth and Bev." Lucas said. "They'll probably be here any minute now."

5. So When's the Wedding?

As if on cue, there was a steady knock on the door. Mike rolled his eyes and got up to answer the door.

"You don't have to steady knock on the door you kn-" Max put her hand over his face as a way of saying *shut up*. He just shook his head and moved aside to let them in. He shut the door as El walked in and said,

"Dinner is ready!" The boys cheered and raced into the dining room, causing Mike to face palm. El smiled at him and he grinned back at her. Everyone sat down and talked as they passed around the food, everyone getting as much as they want considering El made a ton of it.

"So, Holly, did you end the school year with good grades?" Bev asked. Holly nodded.

"I had all A's. Better than Mike when he was in my grade." Mike rolled his eyes at that.

"You know what Holly did yesterday?" He asked, and she kicked him under the table, giving him a murderous look. He snorted at that. "She went cat hunting with me when I picked her up from school."

"Oh yeah, thanks for doing that man, my mom would flip the hell out if she lost another cat." Dustin said with a mouthful of spaghetti. The girls rolled their eyes at his lack of manners.

"Just make sure she keeps it inside from now on, because we're gonna have to block her number from the station if she keeps calling like she did." Hopper said.

"Sorry, Hop. You guys know how she is."

"Yeah, she's a bit loony." Lucas said.

"Shut the hell up Lucas." Dustin glared at him and Lucas laughed. They all joked around and talked about college or their work as they ate, just catching up. When everyone was finished eating, Max asked,

"So... When's the wedding?" Mike, who was taking a drink of water, swallowed it wrong and started coughing. El had to keep from laughing as she smacked his back. They all either looked at him weird or laughed at him. El gave Mike a look and he gave her a slight nod.

"Well, we haven't chosen a date yet, but you guys will be the first to know." She made a show of putting her left elbow on the table and leaning against her hand, showing her ring. No one really noticed at first, but Elizabeth freaked out.

"Oh my God! Oh my God! No way!" She exclaimed. Everyone looked at the couple for confirmation and they nodded, grinning. Everyone started cheering, rushing to hug the two or look at the ring. All they heard for the next couple of minutes was *congratulations.*

"I thought you said earlier that he hadn't proposed yet!" Bev exclaimed.

"He hadn't, then!"

"So it was between the time you three left the store and just now?"

"Well duh." Mike said like it was obvious, which it was.

"Alright smart ass, I will slap you." She glared at him and he just grinned.

"Why didn't you tell us you were proposing to her?" Will asked.

"Or that you even thought about buying a ring?" Lucas continued.

"Guys, calm down. I bought it a couple months ago after I asked for Hopper and Joyce's permission, and I didn't really plan anything, except in my head. It just happened."

"I'm so happy! I figured Mike would have waited even longer after he asked us for permission!" Joyce said, hugging El once again.

"My baby boy is getting married!" Karen exclaimed, tears in her eyes as she squished Mike's cheeks together as if he was a baby.

"Mom!" He chuckled.

"Congrats, son." Ted said, putting hand on Mike's shoulder.

"I'd hug you if mom would let me go." Mike said, though you could hardly understand him. Karen rolled her eyes playfully and let him go. He hugged his dad, and then shook Hoppers hand.

"How'd he propose? Did he just straight up ask you?" Max asked.

"Or did he try to make it at least a little bit romantic?"

"We were putting groceries up." El said with a laugh. "Holly was in the shower, and we were talking and he got quiet. I basically asked him why and turned around and there he was, down on one knee, about to propose."

"Did you cry?" Will piped up. El laughed.

"Of course I did! I've been waiting for years!"

"You make it sound like you're like, 30 and have been dating for a million years or something." Dustin said, giving her a side hug.

"It sure feels like it."

"Yeah, me and her were joking about how if he didn't propose soon, El would be the one to propose to him." Bev said, giggling.

"It's true, I think she would have, honestly." Hopper joked. El nodded in agreement.

"I really would have." She said as Mike walked over to her and put an arm around her.

"Would have what?" He asked.

"Propose to you if you didn't soon." He raised an eyebrow, causing her to laugh, and kissed her head.

"Okay then."

6. Trashmouth

Saturday, May 26, 1992
Derry, Maine

"So everyone comes home today?" Bev asked Bill. He nodded, but then realized she obviously couldn't see him and said,

"Yeah. I got in late last night, which is why I didn't call. I'm s-sorry."

"It's okay." He could hear the smile in her voice.

"Uh, I'm actually at the airport now, waiting in my car. Mike is meeting me here. I haven't seen or talked to Richie yet."

"I figured he'd be there, trash talking random people while he waits for his beloved *Spaghetti Man*." Bill chuckled.

"I know. I'm surprised I haven't seen him cursing someone out yet. But hey, he might be around here somewhere. Then again, I haven't really talked to him much in the last two years, so maybe he doesn't do that anymore." They were both silent for a few seconds and then they both laughed.

"Sure, I'll believe that when pigs fly." She said and he laughed. He looked up and saw Mike walking towards his car, so he said, "Hey, Mike is here, so I'll call you back later, okay?"

"Okay. Bye Bill."

"Bye Bev." He hung up the phone and got out to greet Mike. They hugged.

"How you doing, man?" Mike asked.

"I'm good! I just got off the phone with Bev, actually." He said, grinning. "How about you?"

"I'm good too, it's pretty boring without everyone here."

"Yeah, school is pretty boring too. I have friends there, but no one

will compare to you guys." Mike grinned at him and clapped him on the back.

"So, where's Trashmouth, huh?"

"Right here mutha fuckas!" They turned around just as the tall, curly haired potty mouth walked up to them. "Sorry I took so long, I was out doing Eddie's mom if you know what I mean-"

"Beep beep Richie." Bill said, chuckling. Richie glared at him for a second, but his grin returned as he gave them each a one armed hug.

"Nah, I was practicing with my band at the park for our last show tonight." He told them as they began to walk into the airport.

"Your last show?" Mike asked as Bill asked,

"Your band? Since when did you have a band?"

"Are you guys breaking up or something?" Mike continued. Richie shook his head.

"Fuck no, they're like the family that actually gives a shit." He replied, looking around. He was nervous. He hadn't seen Eddie in a year, although they talked on the phone all the time, seeing and speaking to each other in person was so much better. "It's our last one until fall." He explained. "They're all going to visit family and stuff over the summer, or go on road trips or some shit." He shrugged and looked at Bill. "I've actually been with them for a little over four years now."

"How the hell do I not know about it then?" Richie just shrugged. "Well, which park is it at? I'm gonna come watch it tonight."

"It's at the one closest to the square." He answered.

"Sweet. What's the name of the band?" Bill asked.

"Take one guess." Mike said, chuckling.

"Hm...Trashmouth?"

"Ding ding ding, we have a winner, my good fellows!" He exclaimed,

high fiving him. Richie looked behind the two, having been standing in front of them, and grinned, pushing past them to greet the next two losers.

"Stan the man and Haystack!" He exclaimed loudly, hugging the two.

"Richie Tozier, your hair is longer than Bev's used to be." Stan said, immediately. Richie rolled his eyes.

"Nice to see you too, Stanley." Stan narrowed his eyes, but then grinned.

"Hold up, where's the glasses?" Ben asked.

"Fuck if I know." He said, shrugging. "Somewhere in my appartment I guess. I finally got contacts."

"No offense, but you look weird without the glasses." Ben said. "I guess it's just because I'm used to your big ass eyes and you wearing them when we were younger."

"He looked like a fucking cartoon character." A familiar voice said, "A fucking cute one, at that." Richie grinned widely, all nerves gone, when he saw Eddie. He'd let his hair go, it was longer and wavy, almost like it wanted to curl, and it was all over the place, instead of combed back like usual.

"Spaghetti Man!" Richie exclaimed, rushing to him and almost picking him up in a hug tightly.

"Don't call me that!" Eddie exclaimed, but hugged him back just as tightly. Richie is a head taller than Eddie now, so Eddie's face was in his chest, where he could smell the cologne he's had to learn to love. "I missed you." He mumbled.

"I missed you too, Eds." Eddie bit his tongue at the nickname and just enjoyed the hug while it lasted. Someone behind them coughed and Richie flipped them off before finally letting Eddie go so he could greet the others.

"Anyone up for some lunch?" Mike asked, and they all agreed. They all got in Bill's car, Eddie having to sit in Richie's lap, which they

were both fine with.

"I'm hungry as shit." Richie said randomly. "I haven't eaten anything yet today."

"Why? You've usually eaten like two full meals by now." Mike joked and Richie rolled his eyes.

"True, but we were up early writing and rehearsing today, so I didn't really get a chance too." He replied, wrapping his arms around Eddie's stomach.

"Rehearse for what?" Ben asked. Richie rolled his eyes and bit his tongue to keep from saying anything he'd regret.

"I'm in a band, have been for four years. Tonight's the last show until fall."

"They're so damn good it's ridiculous." Mike said. "I didn't even know Richie could play guitar, let alone sing."

"You sing?" Stan asked, surprised.

"Damn right I do."

"He's amazing." Eddie told them. "He used to sing to me all the time when we'd go to the-" Richie put a hand over his mouth.

"Shush your face, Spaghetti Man." Eddie licked Richie's hand and Richie grimaced, removing his hand and wiping it on Eddie's shorts. "That's fucking disgusting, Eds."

"I will fucking murder you, stop calling me Eds." He glared at Richie, who just grinned up at him cutely.

"You never know where his hand has been, Eddie." Bill joked.

"Fuck off mother fucker." Richie mumbled, making Bill laugh. When they got to the restaurant, they ordered their food and sat at a table, Mike, Bill and Ben on one side, and Stan, Eddie, and Richie on the other. They joked around for a while until their food came, and Bill finally said,

"So, um, I was wondering... Do you guys have any specific plans for the summer? I mean, I know you'll visit your parents and all but... Yeah." He scratched the back of his neck.

"Well I, for one, will *not* be spending much time with my mom." Eddie said before putting a forkful of salad in his mouth. Richie made a face, he hated salad. "So I'll probably just be with Richie or you guys." He said once he swallowed.

"I don't work on the farm much, just at the library so I won't really do much either." Mike said.

"Same." Ben added.

"I'll be alone in my parents house, probably cleaning and moving stuff around." Stanley said. His parents had left him their house and moved to the city.

"I'll be doing a shit ton of nothing." Richie said, flicking his balled up straw wrapper at Ben. "Since we're not doing anymore shows this summer, I'll probably just stay in my apartment like usual, but with Eds this time." Eddie elbowed him in the side and Stanley cringed at the implied thought.

"What about your parents?"

"Those mother fuckers? Yeah, not a chance. I haven't spent a full summer with them since I was 16 so that's not happening. They don't know anything about me, or care to, so fuck 'em. Anyways, Billiam, why do you ask?"

"Well, Bev and her Aunt have invited us to go out to Hawkins for the summer." He said, looking at them, waiting for them to react. "Her Aunt is apparently rich and wants to meet us, because Bev's told her all about us, so all expenses will be paid."

"I'm game." Mike said. "It'd be nice to get out of town for a bit, wouldn't you say, Richie?"

"Fuck yeah. I'd do anything to get out of this hell hole."

"That would mean I wouldn't have to run from my mom." Eddie said,

his eyes widening, filling with wonder. "She wouldn't try to cut my hair." He seemed awestruck, so Richie grabbed his earlobe and tugged on it, causing Eddie to smack his hand away.

"You'd be completely free of your mom all summer." Bill said.

"I'm in." Richie held up a hand to high five him, but Eddie just ignored him. Richie snickered.

"Me too, I want to go somewhere other than college and Derry." Stanley said.

"What about you, Ben?" Mike asked. Ben shrugged.

"I'm all for it."

7. He Didn't Curse Once

"Great! I'll call Bev later and tell her." Bill grinned to himself.

"It's been what? Almost seven years since we saw Bev?" Stanley asked.

" '85 right?" Mike asked, and Bill nodded.

"That was a... crazy summer." Ben said, his voice growing quieter with every word as he began remembering the events that took place that summer.

"Yeah. Twenty more years." Eddie said, biting his lip.

"Twenty years until what?" Richie piped up, curious.

"You know what, Richie." Stanley rolled his eyes.

"Uh, no I don't?" It came out like a question.

"You know, every twenty-seven years?" Ben asked, tilting his head side to side as he talked.

"What, like a solar eclipse or something? Did that happen that summer?" He asked. He was genuinely confused.

"Richie-No-What? Do you really not remember?" Bill asked.

"What exactly am I supposed to fucking be remembering?" He asked. Eddie put a hand on his shoulder.

"IT." He almost whispered. "Do you not remember *IT*?" The confused look on his face turned into one of remembrance. He sank into his chair, all the memories he'd pushed to the back of his mind quickly flooding back. He bit his lip and they looked at each other. He nodded slightly.

"Yeah, I remember. I don't want to, but I remember." No one said anything for a couple of minutes, thinking of the horrifying memories of that summer. Richie sat up, took a couple of huge gulps from his

Pepsi, burped, and said, "When and why did this happy reunion get so damn depressing?"

They rolled their eyes at his lack of manners but nodded in agreement.

"We'll worry about *IT* when the time comes." Mike said, and they all agreed.

"So, Richie, are we gonna be meeting your band mates tonight?" Stanley asked.

"Probably. We usually go out to the quarry after shows and smoke a couple jo- I'm kidding Eds!" Richie held up his hands, biting his lip to keep from laughing. "I don't smoke, I swear. You know that." Eddie gave him a look and went back to his salad, shaking his head. Richie giggled.

"Whipped." Bill *coughed.* Richie rolled his eyes but the grin never left his face.

That night, there was a pretty good crowd, a hundred and fifty or more people.

"There's a lot of people out here." Stanley said, looking around. They were right at the front, waiting on Richie and his band to come on stage.

"What's taking so long?" Eddie mumbled, but Mike heard him.

"You know Richie, he's gotta be fashionably late to anything and everything." Mike said. Eddie laughed and nodded in agreement, then Richie jogged on stage, a girl and two other boys following him.

"Sorry! Sorry, I didn't mean to be *this* late. Had to put a new string on my guitar, because *someone* decided to pop it." He glared at a curly haired boy sitting at the drums, who gave him a thumbs up. "Anyways, like usual, we're covering songs and not our own, which we'll actually be doing next fall, maybe?" It came out like a question and just about everyone in the crowd cheered. "But this is our last show until then, so I hope you guys enjoy it."

"Wow." Ben almost whispered.

"What?" Bill asked.

"He didn't curse once." He said, which caused the others to laugh.

"Here's *Time After Time*." Richie said, and the music started, but he didn't sing. The girl in the group did. She sang a couple of songs, which Richie and the two other boys joined in on, and finally, Richie said, "We're gonna do a couple more songs-" There were several unhappy boos from the crowd, "I know, I know. I'm gonna miss us too." He joked. "This is *Every Breath You Take*." This was the first song he was singing as a solo, and Eddie was rocking back and forth on his heels, excited. He's never actually watched him perform with his band before.

Every breath you take
Every move you make
Every bond you break
Every step you take
I'll be watching you

Every single day
Every word you say
Every game you play
Every night you stay
I'll be watching you

At the end of the song, Eddie cupped his hands around his mouth and screamed,

"I love you! You're amazing!" Richie looked right at him, a grin on his face. He held up a heart with his hands and winked at him.

"I love you too, Eds." Richie said into the microphone. Eddie smiled at him widely, ignoring the nickname.

"He's fucking..." Bill looked at the others.

"Talented as fuck." Ben replied. They nodded. They sang a couple more songs and the Losers danced and sang along with the ones they

knew. Finally, "This song is *I Love Rock and Roll.*" The crowd cheered.

Just about every single person there sang along, making the last song ten times better. Towards the end, Richie held his microphone out to the Losers and let them sing, which they found hilarious. The other band mates talked to the crowd some and eventually it was just the Losers with a couple of random people standing around talking.

"So, what'd you fuckers think?" Richie asked, sitting on the edge of the stage while the other three went down the steps with the others.

"I don't really know what to say." Stanley said.

"Me neither." Ben agreed. Richie raised an eyebrow.

"You guys were amazing." Eddie said. He walked up to Richie and grabbed the collar of his shirt, pulling him down to whisper in his ear. "But you were the best." He then kissed him right on the lips, in front of everyone. Eddie usually hated PDA so it was a shock to Richie that he was kissing him. He kissed back, but they were interrupted by,

"That is absolutely disgusting! You two are going to he-" Before the lady with no importance could finish her sentence, Richie and Eddie yelled in unison,

"Fuck you!" And kissed again while the rest of the Losers flipped her off. She scoffed and walked off. The two pulled away and burst out laughing. Richie ran a hand through his hair and looked at his band mates.

"Right, I still gotta introduce you ass wipes. This is Ayla, Jack, and Malcolm," He said, pointing at each of them, "And this is Eddie, Ben, Bill, and Stanley." They waved at each other. "You already know Mike."

"It's nice to finally meet you guys!" Ayla said, grinning at them.

"Yeah, Richie never shuts the fuck up about you guys." Richie rolled his eyes and flipped Jack off.

"Anyone up for pizza and movies at my place?" Stanley asked, and

everyone agreed. "You three are obviously welcome to join us." They grinned and nodded.

"Just follow my car." Bill told them and they went on their way.

8. What's Up, Bitch?

Once they arrived at Stanley's house, they all piled out of the car, Ben tripping and falling on his face, causing the others to laugh, but it eventually turned into a huge dog pile with Eddie sitting on top while Jack took a picture of them.

"I can't fucking breath!" Ben wheezed and they all got off him, laughing. Stanley ordered pizza while the others browsed through the many movies he had.

"I think we should let Ayla pick." Mike said. Everyone looked at him. "What? She's the only girl and it's always ladies first, so we should let her pick the first movie." He stated like it was obvious. Richie, giggling quietly, poked Ben and Bill in the sides while they giggled with him. Mike has a bit of a crush on Ayla, but he wouldn't admit it. Eddie just rolled his eyes and agree with Mike. After looking through the movies for a few minutes, she finally settled on *Stand By Me*. About twenty minutes into the movie, the pizza arrived, so Bill helped Stanley get it, and just put the boxes on the coffee table.

"There's a bunch of canned drinks in the fridge if anyone wants one." Stanley told them, and everyone grabbed themselves one at some point or another. After the movie, Ayla, Malcolm and Jack left, apparently having to go pack for their trips.

"Speaking of trips, " Richie said, taking a bite out of his pizza, "When does ours begin?" He asked, semi-dramatically.

"Oh! I need to call Bev!" He almost yelled, rushing to grab his phone. "I meant to call her when we got here." Richie snickered.

"And I'm the one that's whipped?" He mumbled quietly, though everyone heard him.

"Yeah, but Bill's just as whipped as you." Ben said, shrugging. Richie flipped him off and Eddie slapped at his hand.

"Get your hand out of my face." He glared at Richie, who looked at him with a dopey grin on his face. Eddie rolled his eyes but couldn't

help but smile at the curly haired idiot.

"Bev! Hey!"

"Hey! What are you up to?" She asked.

"I'm at Stan's house with everyone." He told her. "We watched a movie with Richie's band after their show."

"Nice! Wait, what? Richie has a band?" She asked.

"Yep! I didn't know either. He's been with them over four years."

"What's the name of the band?"

"Trashmouth." He chuckled. She laughed.

"Figures. Where's Trashmouth at anyways, I don't hear him making sex noises in the back ground."

"That's because he and Eddie are making out-" He ducked away from the pillow being thrown at him.

"No we're not!" Bev heard Eddie yell and she laughed.

"What's up bitch!" Richie yelled.

"Tell him to shut the fuck up and congratulations on the band." She giggled.

"She said shut the fuck up and congrats on the band."

"Hell, gimme the phone." Richie pushed Eddie's legs off him, standing up to grab the phone from Bill.

"Hey!" Bill exclaimed.

"What's up, bitch?" He repeated. "I never shut the fuck up, you know that." She laughed.

"I'm fully aware."

"How's that look alike of mine doing?" He asked. He could almost

hear her roll her eyes, though it made no sense whatsoever.

"He's doing great. He just got engaged."

"Oh really now? Nice, nice. Isn't he like the fucking PG version of me or something?"

"Oh yeah, he curses, just not nearly as bad as you do, Trashmouth. And he can actually see."

"Hey! I can fucking see! Just not well." She laughed. "I gotta take a leak, here." He tossed the phone back to Bill who rolled his eyes. While Richie went to the bathroom, everyone took turns talking to Bev, and finally when Bill was actually able to talk to her again, he said,

"Everyone's agreed to come out to Hawkins."

"Really?" She asked, surprised.

"Yep! It wasn't as difficult as I thought it'd be." She laughed.

"Well, my Aunt already paid in advance. Why, I have no idea. She really wants to meet you guys and actually predicted everyone would come." He laughed.

"When's the flight?"

"Um... Hang on, let me look." She was silent for a couple minutes and finally said, "It's this Wednesday." She hesitated slightly. He grinned.

"Great! I'll let them know. I'd better go before Richie takes the phone again. I'll talk to you later, yeah?"

"Yeah, bye Bill!"

"Bye!" He hung up and looked at them.

"You guys got some packing to do." He said. "The flight is Wednesday."

"This Wednesday?" Stanley asked. He nodded. Stanley bit his lip, but

then grinned.

"Wait, when do we come back?"

"Well, as far as I know, we're staying all summer, so, we'll probably come back in August." Bill replied.

"Do you have any idea how many outfits I have to pack?" Eddie looked at Richie, eyes wide. He started rambling until Richie put his hand over his mouth again.

"Eddie, chill. You don't have to pack ten bags, we can just buy you more clothes there if you need them." Eddie crossed his arms and huffed, finally shutting up. Richie removed his hand, thankful Eddie didn't lick him again like earlier.

"Thanks for not licking my hand again." He said.

"Don't push your luck."

"You two are fucking weird." Bill said, looking at them.

"You're fucking weird. We're all fucking weird!" Richie sang, quite loudly and off key. "I don't know what the fuck that was but oh well." They all burst out laughing.

"Hey, being weird and different *is* what brought us all together so I honestly don't care how weird I am." Stanley said, shrugging. They all nodded in agreement.

"Awe, don't get all sappy on us, Stan the Man." Richie said, punching him in the arm lightly. He rolled his eyes and pushed him back, causing Richie to laugh and Eddie to curse at him for waking him up.

"It's only ten, Eds, why the fuck are you tired?"

"I was on a plane for three hours, plus I've had to deal with you for about five now." He said, yawning. Richie rolled his eyes.

"You love me though." He said, pinching his cheeks. "Cutie."

"Oh shut it." Eddie slapped his hand away and sighed, closing his

eyes. "Yes, I love you, but you're annoying as fuck sometimes." Richie giggled.

"I love you too, Eds."

9. Max Meets Richie

Wednesday, May 30, 1992
Hawkins, Indiana
1 AM

Mike sighed, relieved to finally be home. All the lights in the house were off, so he automatically assumed El was in the bed. Kicking his shoes off, he tossed his bag on the couch and left it there, making his way to the kitchen to get some water. The light turned on and he jumped, almost pulling out his gun.

"El! What the hell?" He exclaimed, placing a hand over his heart. She giggled.

"I'm sorry, didn't mean to scare ya." She said, grinning. He couldn't help but smile at her. She hopped up on the counter and he walked over to her, standing between her legs and wrapping his arms around her in a hug. She hugged him back, immediately sensing his sadness. "Still no luck?" She asked gently. He shook his head, his face buried in her hair.

"Nope. Two more kids have gone missing since the last." He sighed.

"That's five in the last two weeks." He nodded.

"I don't understand it. They're all around the same age, they're all good kids. They wouldn't just run off somewhere. Someone or something's taking them."

"Do you...Do you think it could be that guy you told me about?" She asked quietly. He bit his lips, those were his exact thoughts.

"It could be but... I haven't seen him again. I hope it's not, I hope the creep is long gone." She nodded. "My job is to keep people safe, and I can't even do that."

"Hey, look at me." He looked at her and she pushed his hair out of his eyes. "You're amazing at your job, Mike, don't ever doubt yourself. Just imagine if you weren't with Holly that day, he could have gotten

her, and you kept her safe." He sighed but didn't say anything, he just fiddled with the ring on her finger. Deciding to change the subject, she said, "So, did you know that Bev's friends are flying out today?" He perked up a little then.

"Really?" She nodded. "Sweet, I'll be glad when I get to meet that Bill guy." She chuckled. He grabbed the cup of water he'd made and took a sip when she asked,

"What about Richie?" He coughed, the water going down the wrong pipe. She patted his back. "You okay?" He nodded, coughing one last time.

"I, um..." He hesitated, thinking about the clown that said *beep beep Richie*, and trying to decide whether or not to tell her about it. Finally, he said, "I didn't want to tell you, because I didn't think it'd be *that* big of a deal but... That clown called me Richie." She raised an eyebrow.

"He called you Richie? What did he say exactly?"

"Beep beep Richie...then he disappeared." She bit her lip.

"I have to admit, that's really creepy but... It's probably just a coinky dink right?"

"Did you really just say coinky dink?" He asked. She snorted, having just realized it herself and nodded.

"I did. Don't judge me." He chuckled and pecked her on the lips.

"Hopefully it's just a coinky dink." He joked and she rolled her eyes. "I think I'm gonna start using that from now on." She smacked his shoulder.

"Alright, let's go to bed, I can see how tired you are." She hopped off the counter and grabbed his hand, pulling him towards the stairs, using her powers to turn the lights off.

Derry, Maine

7 AM

"Richie, I swear to God, if you don't stop whining." Eddie mumbled, pinching the bridge of his nose.

"Oh, I'm sorry I'm terrified of getting on a plane that goes thousands of feet in the air and could crash any second!"

"Just take the damn NyQuil and go to sleep, it'll be over before you know it." Ben told him, handing him the tiny measuring cup, filled to the brim with the bitter liquid. They were waiting to board the plane and Richie was being a baby. Huffing, a took the cup from him and downed it like it was a shot, making a face afterwards. "Good, I bet you'll be asleep before the plane even lifts off."

And he was, snoring with his head on Eddie's shoulder, the only thing holding him up being the arm rest between them.

Three hours later, they landed and were in Hawkins, the whining continuing, but not from Richie. Now, it was Eddie because,

"I can't believe they lost my fucking luggage. This is such bullshit!" He exclaimed.

"Look, Eds, I already told you one time, I will buy you clothes." Richie said, putting his hands on his shoulders.

"That's not the point!"

"I know, this place is bullshit for losing your luggage." Stanley butted in.

"No, that's...that's not it." Eddie mumbled.

"What is it? Got some secrets in there?" Bill asked, wiggling his eyebrows.

"As a matter of fact, yes, but not the kind you guys are thinking." He crossed his arms, stepping away from Richie and going up to the desk. The rest of them looked at Richie.

"You don't know what he's got in his bags?" Mike asked. Richie shook

his head.

"Not a clue. He wouldn't let me help pack."

"That's probably just because you don't really pack, you just ball your clothes up and throw it in the bag." Ben said.

"True."

They stayed there for another hour and a half until they miraculously found Eddie's luggage and they were on their way to Bev's aunts house. Apparently, Bev's aunt had rented them a van and it was waiting on them with directions to her house in it.

"Well, this isn't creepy at all." Stanley mumbled to himself, as they somehow managed to get all of their belongings in the van, along with themselves.

"She's just excited, is all." Bill told him, starting the van.

"Have you ever drove a van before, Billiam?"

"Shut the fuck up, Richie."

After about twenty minutes of driving, the Losers finally arrived, and they knew for a fact it was the right house, due to the red head sitting on the front step with... another red head sitting next to her. They both stood up when Bill parked the car. He flew out of the car and ran to Bev, nearly picking her up in a hug. She laughed and hugged him back just as tight. The other red head just stood back and watched, a small smile on her face. The rest of the Losers ran up to her, and the hug between her and Bill turned into a group hug.

"I missed you guys too! But I can't breathe!" The boys instantly let her go, and she hugged them one by one, talking to them about how different and handsome they are now. Stopping at Richie, she couldn't help but stare at him.

"What, like what you see?"

"Mike what the fuck are you doing here?" The red head asked, and Mike H(Mike Hanlon will from now on be known as Mike H, and

Mike Wheeler will just be Mike :D) looked at her, confused.

"Um..." She wasn't looking at him, but instead at Richie.

"This isn't Mike, Max." Bev chuckled. "This is Richie."

"Oh. Anyways, why the hell do you look so much like Mike?"

"Fuck if I know." Richie shrugged.

"This is bizarre as hell." Bev said. "Hey, where are your glasses?" She asked. He took them out of his pocket, swirling them around a bit.

"Ol' Trashmouth's got contacts now."

"Trashmouth?" Max asked, confused, and Richie grinned.

"You'll understand within the next hour. Come on, let's introduce you to my Aunt Maryanne and cousin Elizabeth."

10. When The Shit?

1PM

"Hey, Carrot, can you not stare at me? Take a picture or something." Richie told Max an hour later, when Maryanne left to go grocery shopping. Max rolled her eyes.

"Well excuse me for staring at my boyfriends best friends fucking twin." Richie made a face.

"That confused the fuck outta me so I'm just gonna act like I know what you're talking about." Max burst out laughing.

"I like you." She said.

"Sorry, Carrot, but I'm happily taken." He told her, sitting on Eddie's lap.

"Isn't that supposed to be the other way around?" Stanley asked. The two shrugged and Richie just hugged Eddie's head to his chest.

"Thanks for not cursing in front of my mom, guys." Elizabeth told them. "Because I heard you guys are quite the potty mouths-"

"Trashmouth!" Ben pointed at Richie who flipped him off.

"It's true though." Stanley said. "We all usually curse like sailors, especially Richie, which is why he's Trashmouth."

"This fucker fell asleep." Mike H said, looking at Richie, who was actually asleep, his cheek resting on Eddie's head.

"Oh my God, he's gonna drool on me! Again!" Eddie smacked Richie's leg and he lifted his head up.

"What I miss?" He asked sleepily.

"If you're gonna go to sleep get off me."

"Nah, I'm good." He stood up.

"Do you guys want anything to eat or drink?" Bev asked, rolling her eyes at Richie. They all shrugged. "You guys are so useful, you know that? Let's go to Benny's." She said, standing up.

"I'm all for it." Bill said, standing up with her.

"Whipped." Ben mumbled and Bill glared at him.

"When the shit are Mike and Richie gonna meet, Bev?" Max asked.

"Oh, we've already met." Richie said, throwing an arm around Mike H's shoulder. He shrugged him off and Richie snickered.

"When the shit?" Mike H looked at her weird.

"Is that even something people say?" Stanley asked.

"I say it. Now, I gotta see Mike's reaction."

"Oh come on, I doubt we look that much alike."

"Richie's gonna be running down the street screaming *what the fuck* you just wait and see." Elizabeth said. Stanley snorted at that.

"Richie does that anyways." Mike H said. "See?" He gestured to Richie running out the door screaming,

"WHAT THE FUCK IS UP BITCHES!"

"What is wrong with him?" Max asked. They sighed in unison.

"Honestly?" Eddie asked. "We don't have a damn clue."

"What the hell Richie!" Stanley called after him. Richie was already sitting in the back of Bill's car, waiting.

"He's such a child." Bev rolled her eyes. "But I missed him. Come on, let's go."

"Michael Wheeler, get your ass up!" El yelled from the bathroom. A few seconds later she heard,

"I think the fuck not, Jane Hopper!" He yelled back. She opened the door and and with the flick of her wrist, yanked the blankets off him. "No fair! You used your powers." He pouted, rolling onto is back and looking at her.

"One, don't call me that, two, I will hold you over that cliff, keep messing with me." She glared at him. "And three, like you always tell Nancy, all's fair in love and war." They stared at each other for a few seconds and burst out laughing. She threw herself on the bed and crawled on top of him.

"Well, hello there." He grinned at her. She pecked him on the lips.

"You seriously need to get up though, you've been laying back here, in and out of consciousness for like three hours. It's after 1 o'clock."

"I'm just so...so sleepy and lazy." He told her, dragging out the *e* sound while pretending to fall asleep.

"You are such an idiot, Mike." She rolled her eyes. "We're meeting Bev's Derry friends in an hour, you need to get up and take a shower. You still stink of dirt and grass. And chlorine?" She sniffed his hair and he snorted.

"You don't wanna know." He replied, playing with one of her curls. "I'll take a shower if you join me." He wiggled his eyebrows.

"Oh my God." She giggled. "What's up with you today?" He shrugged.

"I guess I slept good last night." He replied, sitting up and causing her to fall back onto the mattress. She glared at him for a second and proceeded to slap him on the face lightly.

"You also need to shave."

"And you need to take a shower with me."

"Michael." She glared at him and he laughed and stood up, going to the closet. He heard the bed squeak as she got up. "Anyways," She kissed him on the cheek, "I'm gonna go make us something to eat and I expect you to be in the kitchen in no more than forty-five minutes."

"Yes, mom."

"*Michael*." He laughed again and went in the bathroom.

Thirty minutes later, Mike was sitting on the counter, shaking his wet hair like a dog. El sighed and looked at him and he grinned at her cutely. There was a knock on the door.

"That's probably Will, Dustin, and Lucas." She told him and he nodded.

"What about Max?"

"Oh, she's with Bev."

"Okay." He let the three men inside and they immediately made themselves at home in the living room. "Really guys? This isn't my mom's basement."

"Hey that reminds me, *you* have a basement. Let's go chill there!" Dustin said, getting up and running down the hall. Mike sighed and pointed a finger towards Dustin, telling Will and Lucas to follow him. They did and he went back in the kitchen where El finished making lunch for the two of them.

"I kind of feel bad for not making everyone else anything." She said, taking a bite out of her sandwich. Mike shrugged.

"I'm pretty sure Bev took them to Benny's and you know full well those three down there have been fed already." She giggled and nodded. By the time they finished their food, Dustin was screaming at Lucas over a board game and Will was laughing his ass off at them, so Mike went to calm them down.

"Some things never change, huh?" Mike asked El, who shook her head.

"They'll always be like that."

"Well, I'm gonna go be a dad for a minute or so, so let us know when everyone gets here." She nodded and he hopped down the stairs, literally, and joined in on the game instead.

11. Two Mike's and a Richie

Ten minutes after Mike joined the rest of the party in the basement, the Losers arrived.

"Girl, you're about to flip the hell out." Max said as soon as El opened the door. El looked at her, confused.

"Um, okay. Come on in everyone! I'm glad you guys are here!" She said, stepping away from the door to let them in. They smiled at her as they walked passed her, and Mike-no, Richie, had the biggest grin on his face. El's jaw dropped when she saw him. Max and Bev giggled.

"Um...Richie?" She asked.

"Yes, tis I, Richie Tozier." He grabbed her hand and kissed it. Eddie thumped him on the back of the head.

"You're creeping her out, idiot. Hi, I'm Eddie." He held a hand out to her. She smiled and shook his hand. "It's nice to meet you."

"It's nice to meet you guys too." She smiled at everyone as they introduced themselves to her.

"Where's the boys?" Max asked.

"In the basement. Hang on, I'll call them up. You guys just make yourselves at home." She gave them a smile and walked down the hall.

"Michael! Lucas! Dustin! William!" The Losers heard El yell at the top of her lungs, and then heard two very annoyed voices whine,

"Don't call me my full name!"

"That's creepy as shit don't do that." Dustin said, walking down the hall, the others following him. El was looking at Mike weird, but he didn't pay any attention to it. Dustin caught sight of Richie and stopped right then and there. "What the fu-Mike, you were just," he turned to look at Mike and his eyes widened.

"Would you move, asshat." Lucas said, pushing him. The Losers were sitting on the two couches in the living room, but Richie was being nosy and looking at pictures on the wall.

"Holy shit." Mike H said, looking back and forth between Richie and Mike. Richie turned around, wondering what he was talking about. Richie was always clueless, so he really had no idea.

"What the fuck." The look alike's said in unison. Richie walked over to Mike hesitantly, and poked his cheek.

"What the hell?" Mike swatted him away. "Why do you have my face?"

"Why do *you* have *my* face?" Richie retorted.

"I think I'm gonna pass out." Stanley whispered to Ben, who snorted.

"Dude I need a minute." Lucas said and walked off with a laughing Max following him.

"Richie, I'm gonna need you to start wearing your glasses again, please and thank you." Bill told him. Richie looked at him.

"I think the fuck not. I look like an alien with them."

"I don't care."

"Um, anyways." Mike said, looking away from Richie, "Uh, I'm Mike, which you guys probably already know that." They nodded. "This is Will, this idiot is Dustin, and the drama queen, Lucas just walked out." Richie looked at everyone and pointed at them, saying,

"That's Haystack, Billiam, Stan the Man, Homeschooled, Eddie Spaghetti-"

"I will murder the fuck out of you, Richie. Shut up." Eddie glared at him and he laughed.

"And as you can see, I'm Richie, the sexiest person in the room." Mike looked at him weird and shook his head.

"What are your actual names?" Will asked them.

"I'm Ben."

"Bill."

"Stanley."

"Mike."

"Shit there's another one."

"Dustin, shut up."

"I'm Eddie."

"It's nice to *finally* meet everyone." Lucas commented, popping up behind Mike.

"You good now, dude?" Mike asked him. Lucas looked at him and then at Richie, and sighed.

"If you two start saying the same shit at the same time I'm gonna have to kill one of you."

"I vote that one." Richie said, raising one hand and pointing at Mike with the other. Dustin snorted. And Mike rolled his eyes. El grabbed Mike's hand and said,

"Why don't we go down to the basement, there's more room down there." She offered, and everyone agreed and followed them.

"Why do you guys have so many couches?" Bill asked. There were three couches in the basement.

"Anytime my parents get a new couch, they give it to us or my sister." Mike replied, plopping down on the end of one couch. El sat in his lap and he wrapped his arms around her while everyone sat on either the floor or the couches.

"We've only been here for about six months." El told them.

"And his parents have given you three couches?" Mike H asked. They

nodded.

"Yep."

"In six months?" Eddie asked, raising an eyebrow.

"My mom is weird, okay? And my dad has yet to find the right couch for his lazy ass to sleep on."

"Well damn, I thought you and your dad were getting along?" Bev asked him.

"Yeah, last week you two *hugged*." Max said.

"Hey where's Elizabeth?" Richie asked, as if just now realizing she wasn't there.

"We dropped her off at home, now hush." Eddie rolled his eyes at him and Richie just grinned at him.

"A lot can go down in a week." Mike replied. "He started talking shit to me about not going to college and becoming a fucking doctor or whatever so... Yeah."

"I'm sorry." Bev said, biting her lip.

"It's fine, I'm not the only one who has *daddy issues*. He can go suck it." The party burst out laughing at that and Bev snorted.

"*Michael*!" El exclaimed, smacking him. He chuckled.

"What was so funny?" Richie asked.

"Mike never says stuff like that." Will explained. "He usually never curses either, so I don't know what his deal is."

"It's his inner Richie coming through." Eddie said. "By the way, what the actual fuck. What kind of mutant DNA sorcery is it that you guys look so much alike?" They shrugged.

"Twenty dollars they're long lost twins." Dustin said. Mike rolled his eyes but they widened when he saw Max, Lucas, Ben and Bev shake

on it.

"Really guys?" Will asked, and they nodded.

"Shit, I'll join on it too." Richie said and shook Dustin's hand.

"It's seriously creepy how much you two look alike. And I mean, you look *nothing* like your parents, Richie." Stanley said. Richie rolled his eyes at the mention of his parents.

"Thank God." He muttered. "I'd be ugly as shit if I did."

"Damn, that bad, huh?" Lucas asked.

"It get's worse, but that's for another day. I wanna know how you and your little group of friends became friends." Ben nodded in agreement and said,

"Yeah, how'd you guys all meet?"

12. How We Met

"Mike was my first friend." Will started. "We were in kindergarten. I was sitting by myself on the swings at recess and he came up to me."

"I asked him to be my friend, he obviously said yes, and we've been friends ever since." Mike grinned and high fived him.

"I moved in next to Mike in first grade." Lucas said.

"Same!" Dustin added. "I just didn't live next to Mike."

"My mom was determined for me to go to the neighbors house to introduce us, and Will was over that day, and we became instant friends, like that." He snapped his fingers. "I spent the rest of the after noon hanging out with them in the basement."

"I came next," Dustin grinned. "These assholes, Troy and James, were picking on me at school. See, I have Cleidocranial Dysplasia, which is a birth defect. I don't have a collar bone, and my teeth took a long time to grow in, so they called me Toothless and picked on me because of how weird I looked. They pushed me one day, and this brave fucker pushed the hell out of Troy." he gestured to Will. "And they left us alone for the rest of the day and we became friends."

"Then they started harassing us up until seventh grade, when El broke Troy's arm and made him pee his pants." El rolled her eyes at that and the Losers laughed.

"How did you do *that*?" Mike H asked. She snorted quietly.

"Uh, you don't wanna know." She said, shaking her head.

"Then Mike beat the shit out of him when we were seniors because he pushed El in the hallway." Dustin added.

"He almost got expelled." Will said, grinning as Mike rolled his eyes.

"Would've ruined my life if I did, but I don't regret beating his ass."

He shrugged.

"Why didn't they expel you though?" Stan asked.

"Someone blackmailed the hell out of Troy and he dropped charges." Mike replied. "I still don't know who did it, but I think it was Hopper." Will snorted at that.

"You're probably right."

"Who's Hopper?" Ben asked.

"My boss." Mike replied. "Chief of police."

"And my dad." El added.

"You're a police officer?" Richie asked, his voice higher than normal. Mike nodded, making a weird face at him. "Lemme go hide my shit-"

"Richie! What the actual fuck?" Eddie smacked him and he laughed. Mike raised an eyebrow at the two. "He's kidding, he's not like that. I hope."

"I smoke cigarettes every once in a while, that's it, officer sir." Richie said, dramatically. Mike sighed and looked at Bev.

"Can I arrest him?"

"Honestly? You probably should, but no, not unless he does something worthy of it."

"He probably will. Remember when he got arrested for stealing ice cream?" Bill asked.

"You got arrested for stealing *ice cream*?" Lucas asked. Richie giggled and nodded.

"They didn't actually take me to jail or nothing, just put me in handcuffs for fifteen minutes because the owner had a stick up her ass. She never liked me."

"Yeah, because you kept stealing ice cream, dipshit." Eddie rolled his

eyes.

"This got random as hell real quick." Max decided, looking at the Losers.

"Oh, Honey, just wait, it get's worse." Richie told her honestly.

"Don't call me that, I'd rather be called Carrot."

"Okay, Carrot." She rolled her eyes and flipped him off. "When and where?"

"I will murder you, Richie."

"How did you become friends with them?" Mike H asked, looking at Max and El.

"It's a long, crazy story, so we're just gonna keep it short and sweet." El started,

"Will went missing, in November of 83', and we, me, Mike, and Dustin, went out looking for him." Lucas continued.

"Instead of finding Will, we found El." Mike smiled at her and she smiled back at him.

"I went away for a while, and that's when Max came in the picture."

"Yeah, I here moved from California in eighth grade. These idiots were basically stalking me." She nodded her head towards Mike, Dustin,Will and Lucas. "Because I beat Dustin's high score on one of the games at the arcade."

"I'd had the highest score for a long time, and then this *Mad Max* person shows up so we wanted to find out who it was." Dustin said, defensively.

"Mike absolutely hated me-"

"I didn't necessarily *hate* you, I just didn't *like* you." He rolled his eyes.

"Like that's any better."

"True, anyways, I was a moody 13 year old who was mad at the world because the love of my life was gone." Dustin and Lucas snickered and El just grinned at him.

"Yeah, anytime there was a meeting with the Party-"

"Party?" Mike H asked.

"That's what we call ourselves." Will told him.

"When we were younger, they played D and D religiously." El said and the boys snickered.

"Ten hour long campaigns, it was ridiculous."

"Oh shut it, Zoomer, you played with us." Dustin rolled his eyes at her.

"So?"

"We *would* be playing it just as much now, when we're all home, if *someone* worked on the campaigns a little more." Lucas looked at Mike, wiggling his eyebrows.

"Oh shut it, Lucas." Mike rolled his eyes. "I've got a job you know."

"I'm kidding man, chill." Lucas chuckled and Mike rolled his eyes again.

"You come up with the campaigns?" Bill asked. Mike nodded.

"Yeah, it used to be one of my favorite things to do. I've always liked stuff like that, the mystery and adventure."

"I told him he should write a book but he won't do it." Will said.

"Yeah, that's a no." Mike shook his head. "I could barely write an essay in school, much less a full length novel." Bill chuckled.

"I'm doing that." He said. "Well, I'm working on a couple things right now."

"Nice, nice. Mystery or adventure? Or both?"

"Both, with a good bit of horror here and there." Mike grinned.

"Sweet."

"Then I popped up in '85." Bev continued. "Mike creeped me the *fuck* out because I thought he was Richie."

"She walked up to him at lunch on the first day of school and asked him *what the fuck are you doing here, Richie* and I swear he almost peed his pants." Max said, causing a few of them to chuckle.

"Okay one, I did *not* almost pee my pants, and two, what would you do if some girl came up to you like that thinking you were someone else?"

"Mike hid behind El." Dustin said, bluntly.

"Screw you, Dustin." Mike glared at him and El laughed.

"I became friends with them that day, even though Mike still creeped me out. And it wasn't just because he looked like Richie, it was because he is the *complete* opposite. Mike's sweet and nice, and doesn't curse like a sailor. Oh, and he can see."

"Fuck you Bev." Richie threw a pillow at her and she laughed.

"Richie can be all of those when he wants to." Eddie retorted and Richie grinned proudly.

"Yeah, but that's usually just to you." Stan pointed out.

"Stan the Man, have I ever told you how much I love you?" Richie asked, looking at him.

"I don't recall you ever telling me that, Richard." Richie narrowed his eyes at him.

"Exactly." Stan snorted. "Anyways, I think it's our turn, right?" He asked. The Party nodded.

"I met Richie's dumbass first. It was halfway through first grade when he joined my class. He'd caused so much trouble with his other teacher they had to move him." Richie snickered. "He sat beside me and all I could think was *wow this kid is weird looking.*"

"Hey! I didn't make fun of your stutter!" Richie pouted. "It's not my fault I had those dumb ass glasses."

"He wouldn't shut up most of the time, but we were friends. Then we met Stan in second grade and Richie called him Noodle because he couldn't remember his name."

"What the hell, Richie." Bev snorted.

"Oh shut up, Molly Ringwald."

"I'm gonna wring ya neck in a minute." She glared at him for a second, then continued grinning.

"Why'd he call him Noodle though?" Lucas asked.

"My hair used to be a lot lighter." Stan explained. "And since it's curly, I guess the first thing that came to mind was noodles." He shrugged and Richie nodded in agreement.

"I was next, in the same grade," Eddie said, "my mom didn't let me go to public school until second grade because she's crazy as hell. Anyways, I have asthma, and Henry Bowers was picking on me and calling me Wheezy."

"We basically called him out on it." Bill continued.

"And I got in my first fight." Richie grinned. "I got a black eye but I got him to leave Eds alone for a while."

"But as we got older, his friend group grew and they tortured us for years." Eddie added. "So it didn't last long."

"Then I came along the summer after eighth grade. Henry and his friends were messing with me and he cut an *H* into my stomach. I basically kicked him in the balls, rolled down a hill and found these guys basically in the sewers." Ben told them. "They helped me get

away from them and helped me clean up."

"They didn't have enough money to buy supplies, so I may or may not have helped them steal it. And a pack of cigarettes." Bev snickered at that. "The next day I went to the quarry with them and jumped off first because they were too chicken shit."

"That cliff was high as shit! And you were taller than half of us so it wasn't that big a deal for you."

"Richie, that makes no damn sense."

"When do I even make sense, Miguel?" Mike H rolled his eyes.

"Don't call me that."

"I came last," Mike H started, and Bill added,

"Lucky number seven!" Mike H chuckled and nodded.

"Henry and his crew were pushing my face in a bunch of meat, don't ask, and they all heard yelling and basically came to my rescue."

"We had a rock war." Richie said, grinning stupidly.

"He screamed *rock war* at the top of his lungs and immediately got hit by a rock." Stan said, laughing. Richie continued grinning, wrapping an arm around Eddie and Bill's shoulders, and said,

"Ahh, good times, eh guys?"

13. Giant Weddings and Guitar Whisperer?

Notes for the Chapter:

> Hey, so, just for the sake of this story and the fact that I freaking love Reddie (and it's fanfiction), gay marriage is legal in Hawkins sooo, yeah! XD
>
> So I'm obviously terrible at posting everyday, and I'm so sorry, I'm just busy and forget sometimes XD. I'm on spring break so you'll be getting at least two chapters a day, I promise! I'm gonna post like four chapters to make up for my absence.

"Anyone up for going to the quarry?" Dustin asked.

"You guys got a quarry here?" Mike H asked. The Party nodded.

"We can't jump off it though, it's way too high." Bev told them.

"Actually-" Mike threw a pillow at Dustin who laughed.

"Shut it."

"Inside joke?" Ben asked, raising an eyebrow. Dustin, Mike, and El looked at each other.

"You could say that." She said.

"I know this is a little late to ask, but I thought you had to work today, Mike?" Lucas asked. Mike shook his head.

"Nope." He said, popping the *P*. "Hop gave me the day off so... Yeah." He did finger guns at him and Lucas rolled his eyes.

"Okay?"

"Is that a yes or a no?" Dustin asked.

"It's a later for me." Max said, standing up. "I have to go to work for like, two hours because Keith's dumbass has to go do some shit."

"And I'm going with her." Lucas said, giving them a thumbs up.

"Is six good for you guys?" She asked before they went upstairs. Everyone nodded and they left.

"Have fun with that, bye guys!" El waved at them.

"They're going to do the dirty." Richie said, earning a slap from Eddie.

"Shut *up* Richie! Excuse him, he's an idiot that has nothing but sex on the brain."

"Remind you of anyone else?" El mumbled, giving Mike a side eye. He snorted.

"You're one to talk." She winked at him.

"Oh, God, I'm out. I'm going to the library, anyone wanna join?" Dustin said, rolling his eyes and standing up.

"I actually wanted to check out the library." Mike H said. "Can I come? If you don't mind?"

"Of course, my dude, you can come."

"I'm coming too!" Ben said, following them upstairs, leaving the couples, Will, and Stan in the basement.

"Everyone's leaving me!" Richie exclaimed dramatically, throwing his hands in the air. Stan rolled his eyes and got up.

"Including me, I think I'm gonna go check out the square." He stated.

"Stan, you don't know how to get there." Bev chuckled.

"I don't care, anything to get away from Richie." He replied, walking up the stairs. Bev rolled her eyes and grabbed Bill's hand.

"Let's go with him, he'll get lost in the fucking woods or something. Even Richie has a better sense of direction then Stan."

"Hey! Oh, wait, that was a compliment." Richie giggled.

"I'll see you guys later, yeah?" Bev asked them, and everyone nodded.

"Everyone just straight up left us with my fucking look alike. What if he kills us, Eddie?" Richie whispered. Eddie rolled his eyes and looked at Mike, who had an eyebrow raised.

"Again, excuse him. I think he was dropped on his head one too many times as a child." Richie snorted.

"I have to agree with him on that one." He stated.

"Is he always like this?" Will asked a few minutes later, watching as Richie started looking through boxes and drawers. Eddie sighed and nodded.

"Sadly, yes, but this definitely isn't the worst. Just wait til he gets comfortable around you."

"Pretty sure he already is." Mike said, motioning towards Richie, who had on a fluffy ass scarf and a fedora with sunglasses on. Eddie sighed and pinched the bridge of his nose. "Hey, it's fine, dude. I have to deal with Dustin, and he's raunchy as hell." They watched Richie make himself look even more like an idiot for a few minutes and finally went back to their own conversation.

"Have you guys talked about a date yet?" Will asked.

"My mom has." Mike replied, shaking his head. "El and I haven't really talked about it much, but my mom is already preparing for it. She wants this big ass wedding with everyone in the family there."

"That's because Nancy and Jonathan got married at the court house and didn't invite her." El pointed out. Mike tilted his head slightly. "And she wants one of her kids to have huge wedding."

"True, but there's still Holly." Mike realized what he said. "Wait, no, Holly is *never* getting married." El rolled her eyes and Will laughed.

"Who's Holly?" Eddie asked.

"My little sister. She's nine." Eddie nodded.

"Mike, she literally wanted to dress up as a bride for Halloween last year." Will said.

"Did I let her? No, I didn't." Mike huffed and crossed his arms. "She's not getting married, end of discussion." Eddie chuckled and realized that his boyfriend and his twin were in fact similar in some ways.

"That's what Richie said about Bev." Eddie said. "But he used to call her his wife all the damn time. He said she's never getting married or going out with anyone other than him, and they weren't even going out."

"Wait, you two were together?" Will asked, confused.

"Oh, we are. That was before he came out to us. Richie is one weird guy."

"Weird for you, Eds!" Richie yelled from somewhere in the basement. Eddie face palmed and shook his head and Mike snorted.

"You think he's funny now, try being around him as long as I have. He's always up my ass." Mike tried to cover up a snort and El smacked him. "Not what I meant." Eddie gave him a look.

"Sorry, you kinda walked right into that one." Eddie sighed.

"I know."

"How long have you two been together?" Mike asked.

"August will be six years." He told them.

"Nice!"

"Have you two thought about getting married?" El asked, curious.

"I have, I doubt he has though. He's never mentioned it before. It wouldn't be a legal marriage if it did happen though." Mike raised an eyebrow. "It's illegal in Maine." He told him.

"Fuck Maine!" Richie yelled.

"Fuck you, Richie!" Eddie yelled back.

"Anytime Eds!"

"Don't call me Eds you ass hat!"

"It's legal here." Will told him. Eddie turned to him quickly.

"Really?" He asked. The three nodded and Eddie smiled to himself.

"Holy shit, you got a guitar?" Richie asked, holding it up for everyone to see. Mike laughed and nodded.

"Yeah, I keep it down here so Dustin won't mess with it. He's too much of an idiot to find out. Speaking of, how the hell did you find it? I had the bitch hid." Richie grinned.

"I speak fuckin' guitar dude, it told me where it was." Richie even snorted at how stupid that sounded.

"That doesn't make sense, Chee." Eddie said, rolling his eyes as he sat next to him, the guitar in hand.

"You mind if I play it?" Richie asked. Mike shook his head.

"Have at it." Richie played around with a few chords for a few minutes, and said,

"Oh, Eds, when do I *ever* make sense? Honestly, we've been over this a million times."

"Shut the fuck up, Richie."

"*Never!*"

14. Would You Like a Prize?

Notes for the Chapter:

> I'm aware that Richie is talked (and written) about a lot in this but there's a good reason. He's got a huge part in this story and is definitely one of the MAIN characters.

A while after Richie started playing the guitar, Will left, telling them he had to go talk to his mom at work and then go change into his swim trunks, in which Richie yelled after him,

"Excuses, excuses!" Will tried to keep from laughing when he heard a loud *slap* and then Richie scream like a girl.

Will did, in fact, have to go talk to his mom, and once he did, he drove back home. He still had about an hour until everyone was going to meet at the quarry, so he decided to draw and listen to music for a while. He still plays the mixed tapes Jonathan had made him years ago, and sang along absentmindedly to *Should I Stay or Should I Go.*

By the time five fort-five rolled around, he'd completed his picture, which didn't sit well with him. Not because it was bad, but because it was *creepy* as hell. It was a clown, bright red hair, a creepy smile, with it's hands behind his back with a balloon floating behind him. Will made a face, biting his lip and putting the picture it a folder and changing into his swim trunks. He as going to ride his bike to the quarry since he didn't live far from it.

He left as soon as he changed and was riding down the trail when he heard a giggle, and a creepy voice say,

"Will the Wise, would you like a prize?" He looked around but didn't see anyone.

"Who's there?" He called, stopping. It was silent for a moment, and

there was another giggle, this time from behind him. His breath caught in his throat and he turned around and saw a red balloon, just floating in the middle of the trail, a couple feet away from. Another giggle, and the balloon popped. He started moving again, faster than before, and was met with everyone except for Richie, and Eddie.

"Hey Will!" Dustin yelled, jumping in the water from one of the smaller cliffs. He shook his head.

"Mike, can I talk to you for a second?" Will asked. Mike nodded and jogged over to him.

"What's up?"

"Something weird-no, creepy weird just happened." Mike raised an eyebrow and Will explained to him what happened.

"Are you sure it wasn't just Richie being a creep?" Speaking of the devil and he shall appear, Richie walked up behind him and put an arm around his shoulders.

"My, my, my, how can you call me a creep, when you've only known me a couple of hours? Aye, twinnie boy?"

"Richie, you're a creep. I think it's established in the first five minutes of talking to you." Stan said, walking past him.

"Fuck you Stan!" Richie then followed Stan, poking at his sides.

Mike looked at Will, who rolled his eyes.

"But I'm sure it wasn't him. It sounded nothing like him."

"Well..." Mike bit his lip, debating on whether or not telling him about the clown from a couple weeks ago.

"What?"

"Richie! Stop or I'm gonna kil-" Eddie's voice was cut abruptly when Richie threw Eddie into the water. Eddie reemerged, coughing and glaring at Richie. "I fucking hate you, Richie."

"I'll uh, I'll tell you later. We should probably make sure Richie doesn't get murdered." Richie was currently being held under the water by, not surprisingly, Eddie and Stan, but Lucas and Max as well. "Hey! I don't want to arrest anyone for murder so let him back up!" He yelled, jogging over to them. Richie popped up, coughing and throwing up his hands, flipping the four off.

"I hate you guys so fucking much it's ridiculous." Richie said, glaring at them.

"Oh come on, Richie, you know we were just messing with you." Eddie said, rolling his eyes.

"Y'all play to fucking much." He grumbled, swimming back to shore. He rubbed his eye. "Got my fucking contact all outta wack."

"Oh shit, does this mean you're pulling out the glasses?" Ben asked, hopeful.

"Hell no, not while we're swimming at least. " Richie said, taking his contacts our and squinting at everyone. "You guys are just gonna be blobs for now." Everyone chuckled at that. "And I'ma get all y'all back for that shit. Coulda killed me."

"You're welcome for saving your ass." Mike said, walking past him and wrapping his arms around El. "Told 'em I didn't want to arrest anyone for murder so they let you go."

"Wow, I feel loved." He deadpanned. "Anyways, fuck this pissed off shit, I'ma go cliff diving." He ran off towards the smaller cliff where Dustin jumped, Ben, Mike H, Max, and Stan following him.

"I can't with this dude." Max said, floating around in the water, watching Richie pretend to run and jump but then stop, multiple times. Everyone was in the water now, just watching them.

"Is he on crack?" El asked. Eddie snorted.

"No, but I wonder that too sometimes."

Bill and Bev were off in the middle of the water, floating on their backs, hands intertwined. They were just listening to everyone laugh

and joke around, splashing each other or attempt to play chicken.

"I missed this." Bev said, quietly.

"Me too." He replied.

"I can't believe that I haven't seen you guys in *seven* fucking years."

"I know, it's crazy. We haven't changed all that much, just a little more mature. I can't say that for Richie though." She snorted.

"I love Richie. You know, if he and Eddie ever get married and have kids I'm gonna be their surrogate." She said, randomly. He looked over at her, an eyebrow raised.

"Really?" He asked, surprised.

"Why do you sound so surprised?"

"I j-just d-d-did-*shit*! I didn't t-think you ever wanted to have kids." He bit his lip nervously.

"No I do, I've changed a lot too, Bill. When Mike's sister, Nancy, had his niece, I had baby fever for months. I want that." She sighed. "And I want Richie and Eddie to be happy, you know? After all the shit they dealt with with their parents, and all the negativity in Derry for them being together."

"I understand. I want it too." He nodded and she smiled. "Wait, how did you know about all that?"

"Don't tell him I told you this, but Richie used to, well, he still did up until the other day, he'd call me all the time, especially during high school, and rant over his parents or the assholes at school. We'd have these cheesy conversations about Eddie for hours. He told me he wants to marry him. And guess what?"

"What?"

"It's legal here." She said, smiling. He smiled.

"Well, one of them better hurry up and grow a pair and propose." Bev

grinned and looked away from him.

"I know something you don't know!" She sing songed. His eyes widened.

"Is Richie-?" She just shook her head and put a finger to her lips. His jaw dropped and he looked at the couple. Eddie was sitting on Richie's shoulders, playing chicken against Mike and El and the latter were winning. "Say a word and you're dead, understand, Denbrough?" He snorted and nodded.

"I shant say a word to no one." She laughed at that. He swam closer to her, having drifted apart, and hugged her to him. "I love you, Bev." She looked up at him, surprised that he just came right out and said it. The two had kinda sorta been dating long-distance for a while and no one knew about it. She smiled and kissed him gently,

"I love you too, Bill."

15. Are You Twins? I Don't Know, Maybe

"Hey! Love birds! Stop making out over there and get over here!" Dustin yelled at Bev and Bill, who rolled their eyes but swam their way back over to everyone, who were sitting on towels in the dirt. It's dark out, probably about 8 or 9.

"It's story time!" Max added. They got out of the water holding hands and Bill laid out a towel on the ground and they sat on it, sharing another one.

"I have a question." Richie said, a little while later, when Ben finished telling a story about something he and Mike had done.

"Oh God." Stan rolled his eyes.

"No, no, it's a serious question."

"What?"

"What kind of drunk are you guys?" He asked, dead serious. Everyone stared at him. "Like are you a happy drunk, sappy, crybaby, mean, or something?"

"Well Dustin acts like he's the fucking hulk when he's drunk so sometimes, drunk Mike will handcuff him and he'll try to break them but it doesn't work." Lucas said, causing a few to snicker.

"Mike passed out one time and left me in the cuffs until the next day. I felt like I was in jail." Max said. He snorted.

"Why did I even put them on you?"

"I wouldn't stop playing with your hair and you got annoyed." She replied. He made a face.

"I'm a giggly bitch most of the time." Will said.

"Same. And clingy." El added and Mike snorted.

"Mike is *wild.*" Lucas said.

"No I'm not!" Mike pushed him jokingly.

"I beg to differ." El rolled her eyes. "He climbed the roof of Steve's house one time and jumped into the pool. Or at least tried to."

"He didn't make it to the pool. I remember that shit." Bev said, grinning.

"Steve, being the good mom he is, took Mike to the hospital because he broke his wrist." Mike was silently dying in El's shoulder.

"This is honestly so creepy." Mike H said, and everyone looked at him.

"What is, Mikey Mike?" Richie asked.

"You two even laugh the same, I swear." He said. "That silent laugh when something's really funny." Mike and Richie snorted. "And the snorting."

"Hey, remember the last time Richie got drunk?" Ben asked. Richie looked at him, an eyebrow raised. "He was so shitfaced, it's ridiculous."

"Oh, do tell, Haystack." Richie put his chin in his hand, mocking interest.

"We were what, 19?" Mike H asked. Ben nodded. "Ben was home on a break, so we decided to get drunk."

"I got it from Maggie's stash I think." Richie said, rolling his eyes at the name.

"Maggie?" Lucas asked.

"My mom." He mumbled back.

"Oh."

"Yeah, we got drunk off our asses. It was a couple bottles of cheap liquor, and Richie got so drunk he started crying because he wanted spaghetti." Ben giggled a little at that.

"I don't remember that?" It came out like a question. Ben held up a finger and continued.

"So, we were at my house, and my mom had made spaghetti the night before, so I went and got him some, but he just pushed it away and continued crying."

"Guess what he was talking about?" Mike H said, grinning. "Or who, actually." Eddie bit his lip to keep from smiling and Richie started laughing.

"He wanted Eddie, didn't he?" Bev asked, a smile forming on her face. The two nodded.

"What does Eddie have to do with spaghetti?" El asked, confused.

"It rhymes." Richie said. "He's my little Eddie Spaghetti."

"I hate that worse than Eds, asshole. Stop calling me that!" Richie just hugged him.

"Nah, you love it."

"Okay, that's actually cute." Max said, and looked at Lucas. "Why don't you call me names that rhyme with my name?"

"What do you want do be called? Max Wax or something?" She smacked him on the arm and rolled her eyes.

"Wait, who's Steve?" Stan asked, remembering his name.

"Our mom."

"Shut up, Dustin." Mike rolled his eyes. "You want the whole story or a short version?"

"Either or." The Losers shrugged.

"He used to date my older sister, Nancy, when we were thirteen." He started.

"Is she hot-? Ow! It was a *joke,* Eds, *a joke*!"

"Don't call me Eds!"

"Anyways, he and Dustin basically became best friends or something after they broke up, and since then he would haul us around in his car or do random shit for us."

"So he's our mom."

"Why are you like this, Dustin? Honestly." Max rolled her eyes and he snickered.

"Speaking of Nancy, when is she and Jonathan bringing Lily over?" Bev asked.

"You only use me for my niece, don't you Bev?" Mike joked. "Uh, I think they're coming back on Saturday?" He looked at El for confirmation and she nodded.

"Where'd they go, anyway?" Lucas asked.

"They went on a trip or something." Mike shrugged. "Wanted to show Lily something other than Hawkins even though she's not even three yet." He rolled his eyes at that and El giggled.

"Whomst is Jonathan?" Richie asked.

"Whomst isn't a word, Richie." He just ignored Ben and looked at Mike for an explanation.

"My older brother." Will replied.

"So you two are like, related now?" Bill asked, and Mike and Will nodded.

They continued telling stories, usually from high school, for a while and it got quiet, the only sound being the rustling leaves in the wind.

"This silence is making my ears ring." Mike H said after a few minutes.

"Well, Richie and Eddie are sucking face, so that's why Richie's quiet." Stan said, resulting in the two to flip him off but pull away from each

other.

"Did you bring your guitar?" Ben asked Richie.

"Psh, you know I did." He got up, almost falling on his face. "Eddie, are my glasses in the car?" He asked. Eddie got up with him.

"Yeah, I'll grab them for you."

"I'm a big boy, I can get 'em."

"Yeah, you can't see two feet in front of you Chee." Richie snorted but followed Eddie while the others laughed at them. Richie got his guitar out of the trunk while Eddie got his glasses for him. He shut the door and handed the glasses to Richie, who put them on.

"Hot damn, it feels good to be able to see again!" He exclaimed loudly, throwing an arm around Eddie and walking back towards the group, who laughed. Richie plopped down on he and Eddie's towel and Eddie sat next to him. "Alright, get a good look at me in glasses 'cause it's only for tonight." He muttered, looking at his guitar.

"Why?" El asked. He raised an eyebrow and looked at her.

"Why what?"

"Why don't you wear them?"

"I look like a fuckin' alien or somethin'. I hate 'em."

"No you don't!" Eddie smacked him lightly.

"They look good on you." Max said. "Like, they...fit you? I guess you could sat it like that." He looked at her and pushed them up higher on his nose. "Wait, no, they suit you! That's the right word." Will snorted and she glared at him.

"Yeah dude, they suit you like Dustin's hat suits him." Bev said. "It's weird seeing either of you without them. I've always loved your glasses, and I hate his hat but...What are you gonna do?"

"Hey!" Dustin glared at her and she laughed. Richie snorted.

"I don't know, I might wear 'em." He shrugged.

"I'll flush his contacts down the toilet while he's sleeping." Eddie said, seriously. Richie looked at him.

"I wish you would, Kaspbrak. Those are expensive as hell."

"Oooh, last name. It's getting feisty." Dustin joked and Richie flipped him off.

"I'd pay you back." Eddie grinned at him. Richie rolled his eyes. "I wouldn't actually do that, Chee."

"He's too chicken shit." Mike H piped up.

"Fuck you Mike!" Eddie threw a rock at him but missed, causing Richie to laugh.

"If you were to get rid of my contacts I'd get rid of your fanny packs." Eddie rolled his eyes and thumped him on the back of the head and Richie laughed.

"Fanny packs? Plural?" Mike asked. Eddie nodded. "Okay then."

"Got a problem with that?" Richie asked. Mike put his hands up.

"No! No, there's nothing wrong with that." Lucas snickered and Mike flipped him off.

"I used to get bullied for it, in middle school and high school." Eddie told him.

"Richie would beat their ass usually." Mike H continued.

"Damn right, only I'm allowed to make fun of my Eddie Spaghetti."

"I hate you."

"You love me."

Everyone fell quiet as Richie started playing his guitar, finally, and just listened for a few minutes. Richie was unusually quiet, in the week they had all been together in Derry, any time he played guitar

he would sing.

"Hey Mike?"

"Hm?"

"Which one?" Ben asked.

"Wheeler."

"Oh, what?"

"When's your birthday?"

"Uh, March seventh."

"Year?"

"1971. Uh, were you...?"

"Yeah." He fell silent again, and Eddie saw that he had his thinking face on.

"Are you sure you didn't have a twin or something, Mike? I mean, you have the same fucking birthday." Max said.

"I-I mean it's possible, I guess? We could have like, both gotten adopted or something. Separated at birth."

"Nah, you look to much like Nancy and your parents." Will said.

"Remember when Steve thought you were Nancy? Billy had just beat his ass and Max was driving. It was hilarious."

"Idiot." Lucas thumped him on the back of the head while the Losers looked at them weird.

"I look nothing like those deadbeats." Richie said, absentmindedly strumming the guitar. "Both got blue eyes, I got brown. Straight hair, mine's curly. I'm tall as fuck compared to both of them. They have darker skin, I'm a fuckin' vampire." There were a few chuckles from that. "I'm capable of feelings...Sometimes."

"You're a fuckin' sap, shut up." Eddie rolled his eyes and Richie grinned at him.

"I'm gonna talk to my mom tomorrow. Think your dad will let me off the hook if I go there instead of work in the morning?" He asked, nudging El. She rolled her eyes.

"I'll talk to him." She said. "He'll be fine with it though, he loves you." Mike snorted at that. "What? He does?" He just grinned at her and she rolled her eyes again.

"If you and Eddie keep rolling your eyes like that, they're gonna fall out." Stan said, and they both flipped him off, causing Mike and Richie to laugh.

"What if you are twins?" Bill asked.

"Well, Billiam, if we *are* twins, then we'll be brothers. I mean, even if we're not I'ma call him my twin anyway."

16. I Have a Twin Brother

Thursday, May 31, 1992
9 AM

"Dad! I'm here!" El yelled, walking into his office, where he saw, reading the newspaper and drinking his coffee.

"I'm full aware of that, El." He chuckled, setting the newspaper down. "Where's Mike? He's usually yelling with you. Are you two fighting again?" She rolled her eyes.

"Just because he's not with me *all the time* doesn't mean we're arguing, dad."

"Coulda fooled me." She glared at him but sat in a chair across from him. "Where is he though?"

"Well, it's a family issue-Well, I wouldn't say *issue* but..." She shrugged.

"Is Ted being an ass again?"

"For once, no. Mike may or may not have a twin brother that he didn't know about." He looked at her.

"What? No way." She nodded.

"Yep. His name is Richie Tozier and they are identical. Everything's the same, appearance wise at least, other than Richie's glasses and his hair is longer."

"Why the hell has he just popped up now?"

"Well, I mean, he didn't really just pop up. Long story short, he lives in Derry, Maine, where Bev used to live, and her and her aunt decided to invite him and her five other friends here to spend the summer. They're best friends. Remember when she was kinda freaked out by Mike?" He snorted and nodded. "It's because they look so

much alike. We didn't really believe it at first, she'd never shown us pictures or anything."

"So the Wheeler's had a set of twin boys and gave one up for adoption?"

"Apparently so."

"Hm... Same birthday and everything?" El nodded. "They're probably twins then. So Mike is going to talk to his parents?"

"Yeah, well, he's going to talk to Karen. He and his dad aren't exactly speaking right now."

"What's up with those two and getting along one week and then not speaking the next?"

"You know how Ted is, dad. He's an ass and expected Mike to go to college and do the same shit he's doing. He keeps calling Mike out on it, and it's dumb. You know Mike wanted to do something in music when we were in high school?"

"I had an idea, yeah. I asked him one time and he said it was just a hobby."

"He loves it to death, dad. You've never heard him sing, it's honestly crazy. I mean, he loves working with you, well, not right now with all the kids and all but... You know what I mean. Ted just gives him shit and they've never really seen eye to eye anyways."

"I've never liked Ted."

"I'm not too fond of him either, but he's my soon to be father in law so I'd better get used to it."

"Hey mom! I'm here!" Mike called, walking in. He still had a key to the house, and as pretty proud of it because Nancy doesn't.

"In the kitchen Sweetie!" She called back. He walked in and hugged her, kissing her cheek. She smiled at him. "Do you want some coffee?"

"Nah, I'm fine. I need to talk to you." She raised an eyebrow but nodded, pouring herself a cup and sitting in the chair next to him and they faced each other. "Dad at work?" She nodded.

"And Holly's knocked out upstairs. She's a night owl, like you." He snorted at that. "What did you want to talk about?" He bit his lip, trying to figure out how to ask her. "Is everything okay? Did something else happen? Is El okay?" She asked, worriedly.

"Do I have a twin brother?" He blurted out. Her eyes widened, shocked, and then softened as she looked at him.

"I...How do you know?"

"He's kinda best friends with Bev." She raised an eyebrow.

"What?" He nodded.

"Yep. He lived in Derry, where she lived. He's also staying about ten miles away from here."

"What?" She exclaimed, eyes widening again. He nodded, biting his lip.

"Why didn't you tell me, mom?" He asked, softly. She grabbed one of his hands.

"I was going to, Mike, I was." She nodded, as if agreeing with herself. "I wanted to wait for the right time, but it never came. I-I didn't think I'd ever see him or here about him again. A-Are you identical?" He nodded.

"It's creepy how much we look alike. His hair is just longer than mine and he has the eye sight of a bat, but other than the hair and glasses, and *style,* we're identical. And personality, he has a big mouth." She chuckled and bit her lip.

"Did...Did they change his name? Richard?" He shook his head.

"He goes by Richie though."

"Does he know?"

"I mean, he didn't know for sure that he was adopted, but apparently he had the idea that he was. He said that he looks nothing like his adoptive parents, or acted like them. Said it wouldn't surprise him if he was."

"Do you think he would want to meet me? Meet us?"

"I'll talk to him. He liked the idea of having a twin." He chuckled, remembering one of the many conversations they'd had last night at the quarry.

"When did he get here?" He then went on to explain that Bev and her aunt brought them there for the summer, and that they got there yesterday. He also told her a little about the conversations they'd had.

"He's got a boyfriend." Mike said, after a few minutes of silence. She looked at him, an eyebrow raised.

"I don't care. As long as he's happy, I'm happy." She started tearing up. "I'm so sorry, Mike. I'm sorry I didn't tell you. It was just so hard to give him up and I tried to forget. I know that makes me sound terrible, and I regret ever trying, because I haven't. Not for a second." He hugged her, tightly.

"I'm not mad, mom. I wish you'd have told me though."

"I know, I'm sorry." He hugged her until he tears dried.

"Do I have any other siblings I need to know about?" He asked, stealing her coffee cup and taking a sip.

"Well..." He almost choked and she chuckled. "No, no other siblings. I promise."

"Mom!" He laughed. He checked his watch. "I should probably get going before Hop kills me. I'll talk to him after work and let you know what he says." She nodded and she walked him out, hugging him and kissing him goodbye.

"Well, are you twins?" El asked as soon as Mike walked into the office. She as still sitting with Hopper, both of them reading the

paper, which Mike usually found hilarious. He chuckled upon seeing them. Hopper looked at him expectantly and pointed to a chair to sit. He did so and looked at El.

"I'm assuming you told him?" She nodded, grinning. "Well, I have a brother. It's confirmed."

"Awe! He's gonna be so happy!" She gushed.

"I hope so. I mean, he seemed all happy last night but what if he hates us when I tell him?"

"I doubt he would, kid." Hopper rolled his eyes. "If he's anything like *you* then he'd give you at least a chance." Mike sighed and nodded.

"I guess. It just sucks. Almost 22 years old and I just met my twin brother last night." He shook his head and rubbed his eyes. "This is crazy. Is it weird I'm like...Excited?"

"No, I'm excited too." El said, grinning. "Him and his boyfriend can go on double dates with us and shit."

"Boyfriend?" Hopper asked, surprised. They nodded. "Good for him. How long they been together? A year or two?"

"Almost six years according to Eddie."

"Damn. Any thoughts about getting married?"

"Why are you interrogating me?" Mike asked, dragging out the *e.* Hopper rolled his eyes.

"Well, I guess I have to deal with another one of you so I might as well get to know as much as possible." Mike and El looked at each other, knowing smiles on their faces.

"You don't *even* know, Hop."

"Their personalities? *Completely* different."

17. Undying Love for Bill

Bev's House
1 PM

"It's about fucking time, asshole." Ben said, barely glancing up at Richie as he walked passed him. Richie rolled his eyes.

"Shut up. Y'all know I sleep late."

"True."

Richie walked up to Eddie and hugged him from behind.

"Good afternoon, Richard." Eddie said, looking up at him. He was wearing his glasses and his hair was sticking up wildly. Richie scowled at him.

"Edward."

"I'll murder you in your sleep." Richie snorted and kissed his cheek before hopping up on the counter.

"I love how you just waltz in here at one in the afternoon like you own the place." Bev said, crossing her arms. Richie winked at her.

"For the love of God, do something to that hair!" Stan exclaimed, walking in the kitchen. Richie snickered.

"Come on, Trashmouth, let's go do something to your hair." Bev told him, grabbing his hand and pulling him off the counter. He huffed but followed her. "I'll even paint your nails black, like we used to."

"Well hell, Bev, all you had to do was ask." She grinned up at him. He followed her up to her room and plopped down on her bed, looking around. It was pretty similar to her old bedroom, back in Derry. Simple, yet messy. It was also painted...pink? "Why the fuck is your room pink, Bev?" She snorted.

"Fun fact," She said as she grabbed a brush off her dresser, "This used to be Elizabeth's room, and my Aunt won't let me paint it. Also, this

is probably gonna hurt." She told him as she started brushing through his hair.

"It don't bother me, after years of getting my hair yanked on and shit by Bowers and those fuckers you call my parents." He shrugged. She didn't say anything for a few minutes, she just continued brushing his hair until it was basically just a poofy mess.

"You good with a bun?" She asked. "Like I used to do?" He chuckled.

"Yeah, Eddie will *love* it." She giggled and grabbed a hair tie and began gathering his hair at the top of his head.

"When was the last time you saw them, Rich?" She asked softly, a few minutes later. He sighed.

"Honestly? I don't even remember." He said, biting his lip. "Probably... six years now? Maggie's probably dead and Went's probably next."

"I'm sorry." She said.

"Don't worry about it, Sweet Cheeks." He gave her a big grin and she couldn't help but smile back at him. She pulled a few pieces of hair from it's hold and twirled them around her finger, making them curl back up. Richie looked in the mirror and grinned again. "Shit, I forgot how fucking awesome I looked with my hair up like this."

"You haven't done it anymore?" She asked. He shook his head.

"Nah, only when it got long, like, really long. You know, I let my hair grow to like, below my shoulders one time because I was too lazy to go get it cut?" She snorted.

"That doesn't surprise me, actually." He winked at her. She went to one of her drawers and rummaged through it, before triumphantly throwing her hand in the air, a bottle of black nail polish in her hand. She sat across from him and crossed her legs. She shook the bottle and made a face when she tried to open it. "The fuck?"

"Hand it over, Sweets." He said and she rolled her eyes, but gave it to him. He opened it easily. She raised an eyebrow.

"Whatever happened to the Richie who opened everything with his teeth?"

"Oh, he died when I broke my front tooth." He said, grinning and pointing to which tooth. "Went actually did a good job fixing it." She chuckled and nodded. She grabbed his wrists and put one hand on her knee and the other with the bottle on his.

"Hold it for me?" He nodded and she took the brush out. Grabbing his hand and turning it slightly, she started painting his thumb nail.

"So, are we gonna have a heart to heart like we used to, or sit in silence?" He asked, an eyebrow raised. She snorted.

"Well, what do you want to talk about?" He shrugged.

"I don't know, you pick."

"Well, first of all, how's everything going with you and Eddie? Have you two talked about marriage or anything?"

"Everything's good, I'm just glad he's with me still." He bit his lip. "I mean, I've thought about it but... Why would he want to marry me? We've been together for almost six years, I don't know how he isn't sick of me yet."

"Richie, come on, don't be like that. He wants to marry you, he's told me that himself." He looked at her.

"Really?" She nodded, smiling.

"Oh yeah, he wants to get married, have kids, he loves you Rich, you know that." She said, switching hands. "Oh, and that offer still stands about me being you guys' surrogate." He laughed.

"Thanks, Bev. I've missed you."

"Me too. But hey, if you and Mike are actually twins, which I'm pretty damn sure you are, you'll probably visit more often than not, right?" He shrugged.

"I don't know, probably. What if we are twins and it turns out he

hates me? Or his sisters and parents? They probably wouldn't want to meet me, I mean, they obviously didn't want me."

"Richie, stop thinking like that. I'm sure they had a good reason to give you up." She rolled her eyes. "And Mrs. Wheeler isn't like that, she's one of the sweetest people you'll ever meet. She'll love you."

"What about his dad? He's a jack ass, isn't he?"

"Well, yeah, but he isn't *always* an ass, usually just to Mike. Mike didn't live up to his expectations, he wanted Mike to become a doctor or lawyer or something, or work with him. Mike used to love music, just like you do, pretty sure he still does, but you know. Ted's a lot older than Karen too, so he doesn't do much around the house, other than sleep and eat, which pisses Mike off to no end."

"Well damn, he's definitely not gonna like me then. I mean, I make money off of making music, and I'm in a *band.*"

"He can't say a damn thing to you, Richie. It's your life, you do what you want, just like Mike did. Nancy too, she's a lawyer but Ted wanted her to be a stay at home mom or something, like Karen."

"I like how you're on first name terms with them." He chuckled. She rolled her eyes.

"Shut it. Karen won't let me call her Mrs. Wheeler anymore. Ted hasn't really cared much. The only thing he's useful for is yelling *language* when someone curses."

"Psh, cursing is my native language. He can't stop me from it."

"You're ridiculous." She said, laughing. She finished his other hand and screwed the top back on the bottle and put it next to her bed. "This kind dries quicker so it won't take as long." She told him. He nodded and laid back on her pillows, stretching out.

"How are you and Billy boy doing? Still doing the long-distance thing?" He asked. She looked at him, shocked.

"How did you know about that?"

"It's kinda obvious, Sweets. I mean, the way he hugged you yesterday wasn't exactly subtle. Or was that kissy kissy." She kicked his leg lightly.

"You creep!" She laughed. He snorted. "He told me he loved me."

"Well, that's just as obvious, Bevvie Lou." He winked at her. "Did you confess you're undying love for him yet?"

"Oh, yeah, I told him I loved him back."

"It's about damn time. Jesus, hearing those sappy little phone calls were enough to make one puke."

"You can't say a damn thing, Richie! You and Eddie are just as bad, if not worse!" Richie giggled and gave her another wink.

"Yeah, we're definitely worse."

18. Brother Bonding...Over Pictures

"Hey, Richie!" Elizabeth called.

"What?" He yelled back.

"Mike is on the phone for you!" Richie's eyes widened as he looked at Eddie and Bill, who pushed him towards the kitchen. He rushed in and took the phone from her.

"Hello?"

"Hey! Richie, are you busy?" Mike asked.

"Hey! No, no, there's not much to do but watch TV so... Yeah, why what's up?"

"Is it alright if El and I stop by? I wanna show you something."

"Yeah, yeah, that's fine. Um, did you talk to your mom?"

"I did this morning, yeah." He replied. Richie heard El in the background say something and then a loud smack. "Ow! Leave me alone, woman!" Richie snorted.

"Um, are we...?" Mike didn't say anything for a couple seconds.

"We are." He said, finally.

"Really?" Richie asked, hopefully.

"Really." Richie could practically hear the smile on his face. "We're brothers, man."

"Awesome."

"Yeah?"

"Yeah! Holy shit... I-I don't know what to say."

"Me neither, honestly. Hey, we're gonna go on and head over. We'll be there in ten, okay?"

"Okay, be careful?" It came out like a question.

"I'm a police officer, I'm gonna be careful." Richie chuckled.

"Right."

"See you in a bit."

"Okay, bye." As soon as Richie hung up, he let out a very loud, "OH. MY. GOD. Eddie!" He exclaimed, running back in the living room and picking him up in a hug, bouncing up and down excitedly. "I have a brother! A *twin* brother. Holy shit! And two sisters!" Eddie laughed and hugged him back. Everyone else in the house had come in the living room to see what was going on.

"Did someone propose or something?" Mike H asked, making a face.

"No! I have a brother and two sisters!" Richie explained, letting Eddie go. "Holy shit, I need to sit down." He plopped down on the couch and buried his face in his hands.

"You almost gave me a heart attack, asshole." Stan said, but nudged his leg with his foot. "But congratulations." Richie grinned up at him.

"I think I'm gonna have one, to be honest." He told him and Stan snorted. "He said he had something to show me. Him and El are on the way." He told Bev, who nodded. Eddie sat beside him and put his head on Richie's shoulder. For the next ten minutes, everyone wandered off, Mike H and Ben went to the library *again*, Stan went outside to look at birds with Elizabeth, who was off work for the day, and Bev and Bill sat in the kitchen talking quietly, and Richie and Eddie sat in the living room, Richie's leg steadily bouncing up and down due to nerves. There was a knock on the door and Richie was up in a heart beat, opening the door to reveal two grinning faces staring back at him. Mike held his arms out, and Richie hugged him tightly.

"Holy shit." He muttered.

"I know." Mike replied, flinching at the flash that came next. El shut the door behind them, grinning at Eddie and holding up her camera. They hugged for a few minutes, and finally parted when Mike said,

"Oh! Let's sit down, I'm gonna show you some pictures." He picked up a box that he apparently dropped. They sat on the couch next to each other and El and Eddie went in the kitchen with Bev and Bill. "So, uh, I know yesterday you were looking at pictures and stuff but there weren't any recent ones of my-our sisters or parents. I stopped back at mom's and got this. She's obsessed with pictures." Mike told him, opening the box and pulling out a couple pictures.

"This is Holly on the first day of school this past year." He said, handing him the picture. Holly was smiling widely, her hair curled at the ends, wearing a simple white T-shirt with a rainbow on the shoulder and shorts. "She's the only one with blonde, straight hair. Not sure where she gets it from though." He told him. Richie smiled. He gave him another picture. "That's Nancy a couple months ago." She was smiling, her hair shoulder length and curly, one side pulled out of her face with a clip.

"Damn...I definitely see the resemblance." He said.

"Yeah, a couple years ago, when Steve got his ass beat, he looked at me and thought I was her. I was like..." He made a face and Richie snorted. He handed him another picture. "This is our parents. I don't think dad knows how to smile, honestly. I don't think I've ever seen him smile like, a real smile." Richie made a face.

"I'm sorry but... why does he look like that?" Mike chuckled and shrugged.

"He's older than mom." he said. "The only thing I think we got from him is our height and hair color."

"And love for sleep!" El yelled.

"I do shit to make me tired, he don't do nothing!" He called back and she laughed.

"True!"

"I can tell, we look more like... mom." Richie bit his lip.

"You don't have to call them mom or dad, dude." Mike told him, nudging his arm. "Unless you want to. It's up to you."

"I've never really called anyone that, honestly. Except maybe Bill's parents on accident." Bill snorted from the kitchen. "I usually just called my *parents* Went and Maggie or Ma for her." He shrugged. Mike bit his lip. "I probably will at some point. I mean, it's up to them too, right?" Mike shrugged this time.

"I'm pretty sure mom wouldn't care if you called her mommy or something. And dad, call him Ted or dad and he'll respond to either." Richie laughed. "Mom asked if you wanted to meet her, or well, all of them, really."

"She wants to meet me?" He asked, surprised.

"Well yeah, she cried when I asked her about you."

"She did?" He sounded genuinely surprised. Mike nodded, grinning at him.

"Yeah! She's talking to dad and Holly tonight when he gets home. Holly's gonna shit a brick." Richie snorted. "And she'll probably tell Nancy when they get back in this weekend."

"Do you think they'll hate me?" Richie asked.

"No, not a chance." Mike told him. "I mean, it's not your fault, so they shouldn't. They'll love you. Mom loves you, she never stopped." Richie bit his lip.

"I really have no idea what to say." He said quietly. "And I usually always do." Mike snorted.

"I can tell. I mean, I didn't know what to say when she told me. I just blurted it out and asked her if I had a twin brother. You should have seen her face, I'd have laughed if it was under different circumstances. Her eyes just about popped out of her head." Richie snorted. "She didn't tell me why, though. Why they gave you up for adoption." Richie shrugged at that.

"I don't know, I wouldn't blame them after getting to know me."

"You were literally a day old." Mike rolled his eyes.

"I was probably an annoying baby, seriously." Mike shook his head.

"If you were the annoying baby, then I was the demon because according to mom, *and* Nancy, I screamed my head off and peed on mom every I needed a diaper change."

"Ew." Richie made a face and Mike snorted, shrugging. He handed him another picture, and they spent the rest of the afternoon looking at pictures and talking about random stuff, while El and Eddie had their own conversation in the kitchen with Bill and Bev. Eddie couldn't keep the smile off his face, seeing how happy Richie looked.

19. Meet The Family

Summary for the Chapter:

> shinyzomi- It's been coming along steady! I've got 27 chapters on fanfiction, and I decided to put it here too! There'll probably end up being more than 35 chapters though, it just depends haha
>
> Author_In_Silver_Ink- I'm glad you like it! Well, meeting the family happens in this chapter but you'll have to wait a while for the proposal ;) Thank you so much! <3

Sunday, June 3, 1992
6 PM

Tonight is the night that Richie finally meets his *real* family, and to say he was nervous was a complete understatement. Apparently, Mike had told his mom that he had a boyfriend, and she was fine with it, and so was the rest of the family. Karen had even invited Eddie to come, so here they were, knocking on the front door. Bev had to redo Richie's nails today, because he bit ad his nails so much the polish just chipped right off.

"Hey!" Mike's smiling face greeted them as he opened the door. Richie gave him a nervous smile. "Don't be nervous, dude, trust me." Mike told him, giving him a small smile. Mike gave him a side hug and did the same with Eddie. The two followed Mike down the hall, and looked at the pictures hung on the wall. Well, Mike wasn't wrong when he told him he looked like a frog as a teen. Richie heard El laughing with two others in the kitchen, and he was even more nervous, knowing that it was most likely his *mothers* laughter.

"Hey mom, El, Nance they're here." Mike said, leaning against the door frame in the kitchen. Richie stood next to him and Eddie stood on the other side, holding his hand tightly. The three looked their way, silence immediately taking over. El grinned at them, waving, and Nancy and Karen just stared for a minute.

"Wow." Karen whispered, walking closer to them. Richie gazed at her, noting all the features *he had.* "Can I...Can I hug you?" She asked, shyly. He let go of Eddie's hand, and Mike nudged him, nodding to him slightly. Richie nodded to her and she wrapped her arms around him, burying her face in his chest. He hugged her back, leaning down a bit. She was a whole head and a half shorter than him, so it was a bit awkward, but he found that all his nerves went away with her hug.

Holy shit, is this what it feels like to have a real mom? That actually gives a shit?

Just the thought brought tears to his eyes, but he held them back. Eventually, Karen pulled away, and Richie noticed that Eddie and Mike had joined El and Nancy in the kitchen, leaving the two standing in the doorway. Karen put her hands on either side of his face. She had a few tears running down her cheeks.

"I don't know what to say." She muttered.

"Me neither." He almost whispered. "That never happens." She chuckled, the smile on her face made him feel all warm and gushy on the inside.

What the hell, this is weird.

"Beautiful." She whispered. He almost didn't hear her, but he felt his cheeks warm up. "Nancy? Come meet your brother." She said, looking over her shoulder at Nancy, who stood from her seat next to El. She walked over to them, glancing back at Mike and then Richie a couple times. She held her hands up tentatively, silently asking for a hug. Karen moved out of the way and Richie hugged his sister. His *big sister.* It was weird to even think about, so he didn't. He just thought about the huge fluff of hair tickling nose as he hugged her back.

"This is insane." She mumbled, pulling away and looking up at him.

"No kidding." He agreed. He looked at El, and gave her a wave. She waved back, grinning at him.

"So!" Karen clapped her hands, wiping under her eyes. She turned to

Eddie, who looked nervous now. She smiled at him. "You're Eddie, I'm assuming?" He nodded, smiling at her and holding a hand out.

"It's nice to meet you, Mrs. Wheeler."

"Call me Karen." She told him, grabbing his hand but pulling him into a hug. Richie snickered at the look on his face and Eddie flipped him off, but hugged her back.

"Where'd Jon go?" Mike asked, taking a bite out of a cookie. Karen glared at him, swatting at his arm.

"Those are for later, mister." She scolded and he snorted, stuffing the rest of it in his mouth before she could take it. She rolled her eyes.

"If you weren't so caught up in your fiance you'd know that he left ten minutes ago to go pick Holly and Nora up from Joyce and Hopper's house." Nancy told him, winking at El, who snorted. Mike scowled at her and flicked a crumb at her.

"I'm sorry that I love her sooo much!" He said, leaning down to kiss El sweetly on the mouth. She just rolled her eyes at him, patting his arm when he leaned back up.

"Why don't we all sit down while we wait for everyone to get here? Dad will be back soon." Karen told them, sitting down in one of the chairs. Everyone followed suit, Mike sitting next to El, then Nancy, Richie, and Eddie. "Dinner will be ready in about an hour or so."

"How are you two liking Hawkins so far?" Nancy asked.

"Well, people are a lot nicer here than in Derry, so I'm loving it so far." Eddie told her. Richie nodded in agreement.

"It's a lot better than Derry, Eds." Richie said, nudging him. Eddie glared at him for the nickname. "A lot quieter to say the least."

"Trust me, Hawkins isn't always quiet like this." Karen said. "Soon enough, college kids will be back and throwing parties with high schoolers again."

"Oh God, don't remind me." Mike whined, leaning forward and

putting his forehead on the table. Karen rolled her eyes. "Hops gonna make me go deal with the little assholes and I've had enough of dealing with drunk teenagers."

"Drama queen." Nancy muttered and Mike flipped her off when Karen wasn't looking.

"I'm home!" A voice called, the slamming of a door following right after. Ted, Richie assumed, walked in holding a couple grocery bags. Mike stood up and took them from him wordlessly, putting them on the counter and emptying them before putting the drinks and the few other things away. Richie stood, still a bit nervous. Ted stared at him for a minute.

"Can you take your glasses off for a second, son?" He asked. Richie froze for a second at being called son, but did as he asked. "Wow, you two really are identical." He said, making a face. He gave Richie a small smile, and he *almost laughed* because of how weird it looked. Ted gave him a quick, awkward hug. "It's nice to have you home." He said, moving on to greet El, Nancy and Karen. He turned to Eddie, who stood and held out a hand.

"Nice to meet you, sir. I'm Eddie, Richie's boyfriend." Ted shook his hand.

"It's nice to meet you, Eddie." He gave him a smile too. He patted Mike on the shoulder but didn't say anything to him. Mike just gave him a forced smile before turning back to the task at hand.

"I'm going to go wash up." Ted announced, leaving the kitchen to go upstairs. Richie sat down, burying his face in his hands.

"That was the most awkward I've ever felt in *my life.* And that's saying something." Eddie laughed, rolling his eyes.

"Hey!" Nancy said, nudging Richie, who looked at her. She held up her hand, showing black finger nails. "We match!" She giggled. He chuckled and high fived her. Karen smiled at the two.

"God damn it." Mike muttered, attempting to open a bag of...marshmallows. "Why can't I open things!" He whined, bringing it

up to his mouth and ripping it open.

"You're gonna break a tooth one day, Mike, and you know how much you hate dentists." El told him, stealing the bag before he could even take one out. He glared at her playfully before plopping down in the seat next to her, taking one out of her hand and popping it in his mouth.

"I broke my front tooth a couple years ago. I used to open everything with my teeth." Richie said.

"It's true, he'd open bottles, chip bags, candy wrappers, anything he couldn't open with his hands."

"So everything. I was a weakling." Mike snorted at that.

"Do you remember that time El was over and Mike was trying to open a plastic bag?" Karen asked. "He couldn't get it open and El did."

"Mom! You said no embarrassing stories tonight." He whined.

"Your entire life has been embarrassing, Mike." Nancy said. He glared at her for a second then said,

"You know what, you're right." El held the bag out to Richie and Eddie.

"Want one?"

"No, thank you, though." Eddie said, while Richie stuck his hand in the bag and pulled a couple out, popping them in his mouth the same way Mike had. They heard the front door open again, followed by childish laughter. Only a minute later, Richie felt something on his leg and looked down, only to see a tiny blonde child clinging to his leg like her life depended on it.

"There is a child on my leg." He said simply, not knowing how to react.

"Mikey!" The little girl shrieked. Mike snorted loudly, and El giggled. Nancy chuckled, attempting to pry her tiny hands off of Richie's pants.

"Nora, Sweetie, that's not Mike." She told her, setting her in her lap. Lonora looked at her, confused. She pointed at him and said,

"Not Mikey?" Nancy shook her head.

"No, that's Richie. Mikey's right there." She pointed at Mike, and Lonora looked at him, eyes wide. She pointed to them as she said their names again, "Uncle Mikey, Uncle Richie." Lonora looked like her mind had been blown as she looked between the two of them.

"She's so confused." Jonathan said, chuckling as he and Holly appeared in the hallway.

"She's so cute." Eddie gushed, leaning over Richie and tickling her sides, making her giggle and fold into Nancy. Richie smiled at them.

"Holly?" Mike asked. Holly had been looking at him and Richie for a minute or so, not saying anything.

"This is weird." She said, finally. "Like impossibly weird. Do you two have like, twin telepathy or something? Why do you look exactly alike."

"That's what identical means, Holls. We're supposed to." Mike told her. She glared at him and walked over to Richie, leaning down and kissing him on the cheek. She patted his head.

"I like your hair. Can I braid it later?" She asked. He raised an eyebrow and glanced at Mike and Karen, who were both *giggling* at the question.

"Um, yeah?" She smiled, nodding, and then looked at Eddie. She waved at him shyly. He gave her a grin.

"Hi, I'm Eddie." He told her.

"Nice to meet you." She stuttered a bit. Mike coughed something out, and only El caught it. She burst out laughing, hiding her face in his shoulder.

"What's so funny?" Eddie asked, confused.

"I'll tell you later." El mouthed to him.

20. Only You

Dinner had gone pretty well, at least, until Nancy had forced their parents to give them an explanation as to why one of her brothers had been given up for adoption. Long story short, the Wheeler's had no clue they were expecting twins, and they could barely afford another baby at the time, as the pregnancy had been an accident, *and* they hadn't exactly had money out the ass back then, according to Ted. It was *his* idea to give him up for adoption, which Richie had been pretty iffy about, mumbling under his breath to Eddie when they were alone for all of two seconds. There had been a lot of tears from Karen, Nancy, and even a tear or two from Mike, which he wiped away when no one was looking. Richie didn't really react much to it, other than hugging her and telling her it was alright when she finished telling them.

After dinner, just like Mike had told him, Ted went into the living room for the night, so the rest of the family went downstairs to the remodeled basement so they could talk freely. There was a couch, a love seat on the opposite wall, and a table with six chairs around it.

"That's where we played D and D." Mike told him when he saw that he'd been looking at it. "Mom won't get rid of it."

"You'd think she would, considering how much she used to complain about it." El said, crawling inside a fort that Richie hadn't noticed until now. She motioned for Eddie to follow her, and he did, the two fitting inside it easily.

"What's with the fort?" He asked, sitting on the floor in front of Holly, who was excitedly running a brush through his hair. Mike sat on the floor across from him, leaning against the love seat, holding onto one of Lonora's hands as she spun in a circle.

"El loved forts when we were younger." Mike told him. "And when we first started dating and she started coming over, we set it up and it's been up ever since."

"Awesome. I bet it's awkward trying to sit in there now."

"Oh yeah, definitely. I'm way too tall." Richie snorted, nodding.

"Yeah, I see that."

They all talked among themselves, El and Eddie giggling in the fort, probably swapping embarrassing stories of their fiance and boyfriend. They'd come out a few minutes after Holly finished braiding his hair, only doing a couple... french braids? He couldn't remember what she called them, but he knew his head would be sore later but he just kept them for her sake.

"Nice look there, Richie." El joked. He scowled at her but ran a hand over his head, feeling the braids. It certainly felt weird.

"So, Richie, what do you do?" Jonathan asked, sitting at the table with Nancy and Karen.

"I'm in a band." He told him. "Lead singer."

"Really?" Richie hummed in response, sitting up fully and stretching, his back cracking. Lonora giggled at the sound.

"What's so funny, tiny child?" He asked sweetly, reaching his fingers out to tickle under her arms, causing her to squeal and duck under Mike's arm.

"How long have you and the band been together?" Karen asked.

"Four years. I've always really been into music, since I could remember."

"Me and the rest of our friends all pitched in and bought him his first guitar when we were fourteen." Eddie said, grinning proudly. Richie smiled throwing an arm around Eddie's shoulders.

"I've never cried harder than that day."

"Mike cried when he got his first guitar too." Nancy said.

"Stop exposing me." Mike glared at her and she snorted.

"What, it's true! I've got pictures actually." Karen said, grinning evily.

Mike's eyes widened.

"Don't you dare." She cackled at the face he made. She winked at Richie.

"I'll show you one day." She told him. He chuckled.

"Why don't you sing something?" Jonathan asked.

"I don't know." Richie bit his lip.

"Mike could sing with you." El suggested.

"Mike will do what now?" She rolled her eyes at him, poking him in the side.

"You heard me."

"You sing too, Mike?" Eddie asked. Mike just shrugged.

"He does." El answered for him.

"Mom used to get him, Dustin, Lucas, and Will to sing at our Christmas Eve parties when they were younger." Holly said. "They were pretty good. The only time I ever hear him sing now though is when we're in the car and he's screaming along to the radio." She gave him a glare as he laughed.

"What? It's my favorite thing to do." He said, shrugging.

"Come on, Chee, sing something." Eddie said, looking at him.

"Sing!" Lonora cheered, clapping her hands and grinning at him. She walked over to him, leaning down and grabbing one of his hands in her tiny ones. "Pwease?" She asked sweetly, looking up at him with big brown eyes.

"You, tiny child, are gonna be a heart breaker one day." Richie sighed. "What song would you like to hear, m'lady?" He asked, knowing she wouldn't answer. She just giggled at the voice, and he looked at Eddie, who had the happiest smile on his face. "Got any suggestions, Eds?" Eddie scowled at him, but then said,

"Only You." He said, sitting back and crossing his arms. Richie rolled his eyes, he should have known, it was one of Eddie's favorite songs. He made a show of clearing his throat, causing the others to laugh. He started singing, smiling at Lonora, who still held his hand, swaying back and forth.

Only you make all this world seem right
Only you can make the darkness bright
Only you and you alone
Can thrill me like you do
And fill my heart with love for only you

Richie almost stopped when he heard Mike start singing along with him, shocked by the second voice. He always sang alone.

Only you can make all this change in me
For it's true, you are my destiny
When you hold my hand
I understand the magic that you do
You're my dream come true
My one and only you

They didn't sing the whole song, but Karen could *not* keep the smile off her face when they finished. Both men had red cheeks when they finished, and she couldn't help but notice the way El and Eddie looked at them with so much love.

"That was awesome, you two." Jonathan said, clapping. Everyone else joined in, including Lonora who was beaming at her two uncles.

"Thanks." They mumbled together, giving each other weird looks afterwards.

The group continued their conversations, Holly and Lonora taking up most of Richie's attention, as Holly decided to give her a play by play of all the fights she'd been in recently, and the fact that Lonora kept crawling up his arm and trying to sit on his shoulders, which she managed to do multiple times. She'd barely acknowledged Mike that night, which, as much as he loves his niece, he was kind of grateful for.

Around 10 o'clock, everyone said their goodbyes and went their separate ways. Karen told them multiple times that they were welcome anytime they wanted, day or night, and Richie couldn't wipe the smile off his face, no matter how hard he tried, even when he and Eddie walked into Bev's house. Everyone was still up, watching a movie, which had been paused so that they could ask them questions.

"Was Ted an asshole?"

"Was it awkward, meeting them?"

"Were they accepting of you two?"

"Did your sisters react in a good way?"

"Did anyone cry?"

"What are they like?"

"Okay, shut up and let him talk, guys!" Eddie said loudly, shutting everyone up. Richie then went on to explain the nights events to them, about how awkward it was meeting Ted, all the way down to how obsessed his little niece was with him. After an hour of recounting the story to them, the two went to bed, strangely exhausted from everything.

"So, I'm assuming you had a good time tonight?" Eddie asked him softly, running his hands through Richie's hair, one arm wrapped around his waist. Richie nodded, pulling Eddie closer to him.

"It went a lot better than I thought it would."

"I'm glad. I love you." He kissed Richie's nose lightly and he grinned at him.

"I love you too, Eds. Only you."

Unbeknownst to them, Mike and El were having a somewhat similar conversation, in their own bed. Mike had his arms wrapped around El, her head on his chest while he played with a strand of hair.

"I'm glad everything went good tonight." She told him. He smiled and hummed in agreement.

"Richie straight up stole all of Nora's attention from me." He mumbled.

"Awe, are you jealous?" She joked. He chuckled.

"No, I'm glad she did, honestly. I thought she'd be a bit more freaked out by him. You know, having the same face and all." She snorted and nodded.

"Yeah. It was adorable though." He hummed again.

"I love you." He whispered. "Only you." She giggled at that, pecking his lips before cuddling deeper into the mattress.

"I love you too."

21. Hopper Meets Richie

Hopper definitely didn't expect his day off to go like this. He was able to sleep in, or, sleep in as much as he could. Joyce had made a giant breakfast, although the toast was a little burnt, and had even run to get him a couple donuts. He got his usual morning call from El, who told him all about the little family reunion that happened last night. Evidently, Karen cried like a baby, apologizing for giving their son up for adoption, while Ted actually kept up conversation with them over dinner.

The morning was normal, that is, until he got a call from Flo, stating that multiple older women had called to let them know how disruptive Mike was being, that he wasn't wearing his uniform and he was walking around holding hands with a *man* rather than his *fiance,* and he was cursing like a sailor every where he went.

"Either Mike's gone crazy or his twin brother is out on the town today." He told Joyce, who chuckled.

"He and El were off today, weren't they?" Hopper nodded. "And didn't you say that Ri...Ricky? What's his name?"

"Richie, I think."

"Richie! Yes, that's it. Isn't he dating a man?" He nodded. "That's probably who it is. Mike's probably knocked out still, as we speak, because you know how much he loves sleeping." Hopper chuckled.

"Yeah, I know. I'm gonna call El and make sure though, because you never know after all that's happened in this town." Joyce nodded.

"I'm gonna take a shower, let me know what she says." He nodded and pecked her cheek and went to the phone.

"Future Mrs. Wheeler speaking." Hopper barked out a laugh at that and she giggled. "Hey, dad, what's up?"

"Is that fiance of yours home?"

"Yeah, he's dead to the world right now. Is something wrong? I can go wake him up."

"Nah, everything's okay-ish."

"Okay-ish? What is it?"

"Apparently Richie is being a menace all over town, according to a couple little old ladies."

"Oh God, what'd he do?"

"He and his boyfriend are walking around together and they think it's Mike, because no one knows about him yet, evidently. And he's cursing like a sailor, apparently." El snorted.

"Yeah, his nickname's Trashmouth so that's pretty accurate. I'm going to wake him up in a few minutes and we'll go see what's up. He needs to get up anyways, his lazy ass." Hopper snorted.

"Alright, well, I think I'm gonna go pay him a visit myself, see just how much they look alike."

"It's insane, dad, honestly. Literally the only thing different, appearance wise, is how much longer Richie's hair is. If you see a tall, curly haired guy and a short guy walking together that's him and Eddie." Hopper chuckled.

"Okay, have Mike radio me once he's up and able to actually communicate." She laughed.

"Okay, love you."

"Love you too. Bye."

"Bye!" He hung up and changed into a pair of jeans and a T-shirt, grabbing a baseball cap and let Joyce know he was leaving. It didn't take too long for him to find Richie and Eddie, who had been joined by the redhead known as Beverley. All three were holding hands and laughing, swinging their arms back and forth as they walked towards the park. He drove up next to them and rolled down the window.

"Hey Red!" He called. They stopped and looked over at the grinning Chief, who nearly had a heart attack when he saw Richie. El was right, they *are* identical. "Ricky, get over here."

"It's Richie, Chief-o!" Richie said brightly, letting go of their hands and walking over to the truck, leaning against the window. He grinned at him.

Goddamn even the grin is the same.

"Jesus, kid, El wasn't kidding when she said you and Mike were identical."

"Yeah, I almost shit myself when I saw him the first time."

"Language, Richard."

"I no speak English, Edwardo."

"Idiot." Eddie muttered and then smiled brightly at Hopper and held his hand out. "It's nice to meet you, Chief Hopper."

"Just call me Hop." Hopper smiled back at him.

"Move, Tozier." Bev said, pushing against Richie's side.

"Watch it, Marsh." He scowled at her for a second and then grinned again, letting her open the door and hop in the truck.

"Hey, Hop, you needed to talk to me?" Mike's voice called out over the radio.

"Yeah, looks like you've caused an uproar with the old ladies, kid."

"What the hell? What do you mean?"

"Apparently, you're cheating on El with a man and cursing everyone out." Hopper winked at them and they all laughed. Mike was silent for a minute or so.

"Goddamn it, Richie." Richie cackled. "You asshole! What are you doing to those poor ladies?"

"Nothing, dude! I'm just being me!"

"Ugh, where are you guys at? I need to let them know I'm the good twin."

"I'm the evil twin, eh? I can agree with that." He wiggled his eyebrows.

"El! Get your shoes on we're going to beat my brothers ass!" Richie cackled again and El could be heard laughing in the background.

"We'll be at the park over near my house." Bev said.

"Okay, see you in ten. Prepare for a can of whoop-ass, Richard." Richie laughed loudly.

"See you then, Mikey!" Hopper put the radio down and shook his head, chuckling.

"Hop in, no pun intended. I'll drive you guys there."

"Oh thank you Jesus, it's too hot for this." Eddie breathed, pushing Richie out of the way and opening the door and climbing over Bev.

"You really expect me to get back there?" Richie asked. "Because there's gonna be a Richie sized dent in the ceiling, I can promise that."

"Come on, ya big baby." Bev yanked on his sleeve and he managed to climb in, only hitting his head three or four times. He laid on his stomach in the back, giggling to himself.

"Is he high?"

"I don't smoke, Chief! Only cigarettes for me! Gotta keep the sexy rasp when I sing." Bev shut the door and looked at Hopper, who already looked done with Richie.

"You're one weird kid, ya know?"

"Perfectly aware, sir." Richie grinned at him in the review mirror, sitting up next to Eddie.

"At least he's respectful." He muttered.

"Fuck, Eddie, I have a hangnail."

"Changed my mind." Hopper put the truck in drive and drove off down the road as Bev laughed.

22. Another Mullet Wearing Asshole

"Ready to meet the rest of us Losers, Hop?" Bev asked as she got out of the truck, Eddie and Richie following. Richie literally just slid out of the passenger seat on his stomach and onto the grass to keep from hitting his head on the ceiling anymore. Hopper couldn't help but laugh at the idiot, while Eddie just scowled at him. He got up with a grin and ran over to the picnic tables where the rest of the losers were waiting, tripping and almost falling a couple times.

"Well, he definitely doesn't have balance like Mike, that's for sure." Hopper commented. "Long ass legs wanna move every which way."

"You should have seen him in high school." Eddie said as he and Bev walked with him. "He shot up right before freshman year started and didn't know what to do with himself. Tripped over anything and everything."

"Mike did too. He ran track. That's why I make him deal with college students during the summer, 'cause he's fast." Eddie snorted.

They reached the group, where Richie was laying on top of a table, legs and head hanging off it.

"What the actual hell are you doing, Richie?" Bev asked, sitting next to Bill.

"Sun tanning." He replied.

"In jeans under a tree?" Stan asked. "You know what, you'll probably get a sunburn either way."

"Stan the Man gets off a good one!" Stan rolled his eyes. "Oh, Chief-o, that's Stanley, Benjamin, Michael number two, and William." Richie pointed at everyone and they rolled their eyes.

"Beep beep, Richie."

"All I did was say your full names, no need to beep me." He pouted.

"Anyways, we go by Stan, Ben, Mike, and Bill." Bill said, shaking Hopper's hand. He chuckled.

"Nice to meet you, Chief Hopper but all of El and Mike's friends call me Hop."

"Where'd Max and Lucas go?" Eddie asked.

"Oh, they're here too?" Hopper asked, sitting at the other side of Richie's head.

"Yeah, we're all coming out to chill for a bit." Stan told him. He nodded.

"Probably making out behind a tree or something." Richie replied, lifting a leg up ans scratching it.

"Do you know how ridiculous you look doing that?" Eddie asked. Richie just winked at him and Eddie's face turned red. "Nasty ass." Richie laughed.

"Guys, we need help over here!" Max yelled, and everyone looked in the direction it came from. They could just barely see her red hair and there was faint shouts coming from two other people as well. Richie was off the table quicker than anyone else, running over to them as if he knew exactly what was going on.

Billy had Lucas against the hood of his car, attempting to choke him. Max was doing her damnedest to get him off.

"What the fuck?" Richie exclaimed, rushing over and yanking Billy away from the Lucas with ease. Lucas scrambled away from the car with Max.

"What the fuck are you doing here, Wheeler?" Billy growled. "Thought you were off today."

"I'm not Mike, dumb fuck. I'm his brother. And what the fuck's up with your hair? It's 1992 dumbass, mullets aren't a thing anymore." Richie glanced back at Lucas and Max. "You okay-" He was interrupted by a fist smashing against his face, causing him to stumble back. "The fuck?" He felt blood already dripping from his

nose. He looked at Billy, who had a smug look on his face.

"What're you gonna do ab-" He shut up abruptly when Richie decked him full on the mouth. "You mother fucker!" He punched at him again, almost missing but managing to hit him in the eye. Richie growled and tackled him, punching him repeatedly.

"Holy shit, Holy shit, Holy shit!" Eddie was freaking out, Hopper was shocked, and just about everyone else, including Max and Lucas, were cheering Richie on.

"What the fuck is going on here?" Mike yelled, he and El having just arrived and saw Richie beating the shit out of someone. Mike's voice caught Richie off guard and Billy managed to flip them over, landing one good punch on Richie before Mike yanked him off, slamming him on the ground and crouching next to him, putting his hands behind his back, his knee keeping him from going anywhere.

"This fucker was trying to choke Lucas." Richie hissed, standing up.

"You knocked my teeth out!" Billy yelled. Mike pushed his head in the grass.

"Shut the fuck up." Hopper rushed over and handed Mike a set of handcuffs from who knows where. Mike cuffed him and yanked him to his feet, blood all over his face and clothes. "You deserve it, you racist piece of shit." He pushed him towards Hopper.

"I shoulda arrested your ass years ago." Hopper grumbled. He nodded towards Richie, who was literally being held back by Ben and Mike H. "Calm him down before I have to take him too. I'll talk to you kids later." Yep, definitely didn't expect anything like this this morning. He dragged Billy to his truck and forced him in the back before taking him to the station.

"Dude, calm down, this isn't the first time he's bothered me." Lucas told Richie.

"That doesn't make it any fucking better!" Richie spit blood out on the ground next to him. "Just fucking let me go. I can't do anything else to the fucker anyways." Ben and Mike H hesitantly let him go and he

walked off, fishing for something in his pocket. Mike started to follow him but Bev stopped him.

"Let him calm down a minute. It's rare he ever gets like that and it's best not to bother him." Mike sighed and nodded, watching as Richie dropped something and crouched down to pick it up.

His hands shook as he put the cigarette up to his lips and lit it, staying in the crouched position. He took a drag and closed his eyes, holding the smoke in for a couple seconds before blowing it back out. He felt blood drip onto his other hand and took a deep breath, wiping his nose.

"You two alright?" Mike asked Max and Lucas, who nodded.

"Yeah, you're brother's a damn badass. He should get a job at the station." Lucas said, rubbing his neck with one hand, the other wrapped around Max.

"We can get him for attempted murder, right? Because there are like five or more witnesses that saw him choking him. He needs to go to jail and stay there." Max rambled. Mike squeezed her shoulder comfortingly.

"Pretty sure you don't have to worry about him anymore for a while. Not after that bullshit and the other shit he's got on him already."

"Is Richie gonna get in trouble too?" Eddie asked.

"Who threw the first punch?" Mike asked.

"Billy." Stan told him.

"Then no, it was self defense." El replied, keeping her eyes on Richie, who let out another cloud of smoke from where he was crouching. She walked over to him, ignoring everyone else, and sat next to him, crossing her ankles and leaning back on her hands. He flinched at the movement, his eyes flickering to her and then back to the woods.

"Thought they told you not to bother me."

"They did. I've never followed the rules." She tucked a strand of hair

behind her ear.

"Yet you're dad's the chief of police and fiance's a police officer."

"Like I said, I don't play by the rules."

"Kinky." He muttered. She snorted and grabbed a tissue from her pocket, handing it to him. He nodded to her and wiped some of the blood away from his nose, which, for the most part, had stopped bleeding. He offered the cigarette to her. "Wanna drag?" She took it and blew out a couple rings of smoke, coughing after. He chuckled.

"I usually don't smoke." She said, giving it back to him.

"Where'd you learn to do that then?" He asked, looking at her. She shrugged.

"Natural talent, I guess." She replied, knowing full well how she did it. "You need to let Eddie check you out."

"Kinky." He repeated. She laughed and poked his side.

"Not what I meant. He's probably itching to come over and patch you up." He sighed and took another drag, blowing out a couple rings like hers, and stood up, putting it out against a tree and putting the butt back in the pack. He held a hand out to her and pulled her up and walked back over to the group.

"When I said to prepare for a can of whoop-ass, I didn't mean it literally." Mike said when they were within earshot.

"I knew it was a empty threat coming from you." He replied, shrugging. Eddie grabbed his shirt and pulled him over to the picnic tables, making him sit on top of it so he could clean his face off.

"As hot as that was, I'd rather be able to see your face without any bruises or blood." He told him, taking out a wipe and dabbing at Richie's face.

"Just look at Mike and you'll be fine." Eddie rolled his eyes. Richie snickered and glanced next to him when he saw Mike sit beside him.

"Eh, what's up doc?" He asked. Mike snorted.

"Nothing, just, thanks for helping them out." He said, knocking shoulders with him.

"Hey, one of my friends was in need and I wasn't about to let that mullet wearing asshole hurt him. We've already dealt with one of those back in Derry." Mike raised an eyebrow. "Long story-ow, Eds, careful." He flinched a little when Eddie put pressure on his cheek.

"Don't tell me to be careful when you did this to yourself."

"What the fuck else was I supposed to do?" Eddie didn't reply, he just continued wiping the blood away. He felt someone grab his hands and saw Bev sit next to Eddie and take another wipe out.

"Bloody knuckles again, eh, Rich? Remember last time we did this?" She said, dabbing at his knuckles with the wipe. Richie snorted and then cringed.

"Yeah, I don't think I'll ever forget that. Asshole pushed you against a brick wall, I wasn't gonna let him get away with it." He grumbled.

"You were a lanky little fourteen year old, you got your ass kicked." Eddie said. Richie glared at him.

"Well, I got my ass beat this time too but *I* also put in a ass-whooping." Eddie snorted and patted his head.

"When we get home you need to put some ice on your eye, it's already swelling."

"Why don't we go back now? Have the house to ourselves." Richie wiggled his eyebrows and Eddie smacked his shoulder. "That's spousal abuse, ya know."

"I'll show you abuse in a minute."

"Kinky."

23. Heart to Heart

Summary for the Chapter:

> Richie kinda internally freaks out over accidentally calling Karen mom, and they have a bit of a heart to heart over it and he tells her about his adoptive mom and it gets a lil deep.

Thursday, June 14, 1992

The last week and a half has gone by pretty quickly for the Losers, while for Mike and El it seems like it's dragged on and on. Billy was sent off to some jail in Indianapolis the same day of the fight, where his injuries were taken care of. Mike was proud to tell Richie that he'd knocked three of his teeth out, broke his nose *and* he needed a couple stitches on his cheekbones, which Richie'd obviously started bragging about, all the while he had a black eye and bruised knuckles. The rest of the Losers spent everyday exploring Hawkins with Bev, Dustin, and Will, as Max had to work a lot and Lucas was up her ass, while Mike and El were busy with even *more* missing child cases.

Three more kids have gone missing, and there isn't a trace of them anywhere. Unknown to everyone else, Lucas has been having weird dreams about a clown with red balloons, standing tall around his friends, who were all dead on the ground. He'd told Max about it after the third night in a row, but she had no idea what to do to help.

Dustin probably talked even *more* than Richie when he found out Billy got his ass handed to him, and probably spent two hours on the phone talking to Steve about it as if he was there, when in reality, he and Will joined the group ten minutes after the whole thing, only to see Richie's shirt and face smeared with blood and his eye already swollen.

Now, Richie is sitting in the living room of his *could have been* childhood home while his biological mother fussed over his face,

insisting he put an ice pack over it even though the swelling had gone down days ago and the bruise was already fading.

"Mom, he's fine." Mike said, waving her off as he put a red two in the middle of the coffee table. He, Richie, Eddie and El were sitting on each side, playing Uno, and have been at it for about an hour. "It's been over a week so he's good, right Rich?"

"Si." He mumbled, hardly paying attention to them, only to his cards. "Uno. I'm all good, mom." He said as he went to put another red down. He froze halfway, realizing what he just said. He hadn't actually called her that before. He dropped the card on the table and bit his lip, holding the last card close to his chest as he stared at a chipped piece of paint on the table.

Fuck fuck fuck fuck why did I say that? I mean yeah she's my mom but what if Mike doesn't really want me to call her that? What if he was just saying it to be nice and now they both hate me. I look like an idiot in front of them for letting it slip.

Eddie eyed him and Mike and El looked at Karen, who looked like she was gonna cry. She took a step forward and leaned down and kissed the top of his head. He let out a breath and blinked, eyes flickering to her face for a split second, and all he saw was her smile. He gave her a small one back. He coughed into his hand and looked up again and Mike winked at him. He smiled a small smile at him too and waited for his final turn, slapping the plus four on the table with a loud,

"Whoop!" Eddie started grumbling about losing again but pecked his cheek as a reward. Richie stood up, stretching his arms above his head, his back cracking. Eddie scowled at him so Richie just winked.

"Can I talk to you, Richie?" Karen asked softly. He blinked and let his arms fall back down. He gulped and nodded, biting his lip as he followed her to the basement, of all places. "I only wanted to come down here so they wouldn't eavesdrop. Michael's known to do that." Richie cracked a smile. She sat on the couch and patted the space next to her, crossing her legs. He hesitated for a second, but sat next to her.

Shit she's probably gonna lecture me about not calling her mom. Is she gonna hit me like ma used to? No, no, Mike would've told me, right?

His mind was going a mile a minute, thinking up different ways this was gonna go, and not one of them matched what actually happened.

"Hey, what is it?" She asked, noticing the tears threatening to fall.

"I, uh... I'm sorry for um, for calling you mom..." It was almost a whisper.

"Don't be sorry!" She went to put a hand on his shoulder but he flinched and she retracted her hand instantly. "You can call me mom, I'd love it if you did." She still had that smile on her face, though he could see it in her eyes that she was confused. He looked at her for a couple seconds and didn't realize he was actually crying until he felt her hands on his face. "What's wrong, sweetie?" She asked, swiping her thumbs under his eyes.

"The last time I called anyone mom was...was when I was eighteen." He said quietly.

"Why?"

"Ma, uh, Maggie," He corrected, "Would hit me if I called her ma or mom, so I just stopped." Karen's eyes widened. "I-I don't know why? But...I know it wasn't always like that."

"I'm so sorry." She whispered. "I would *never* hit you, none of you."

"I know. It's just...I'm not used to this type of thing. For a second I thought you would but I know you wouldn't." He chewed the inside of his mouth for a second and sighed. "I haven't seen or talked to either of them since I was eighteen. When I was sixteen I barely slept at home a week at a time, I'd stay with Eddie or someone else."

"Why haven't you talked to them? Did they do something?"

"Well, I...I got kicked out, *officially*, on my, well, *our*, birthday. It was my fault, really, I was talking back to Went because he got mad that I said it was my birthday, and he tried to tell me it wasn't for another month." He started to continue but she interrupted him.

"Don't you *dare* say that it was your fault, do you understand me? That is such *bullshit* that they would do that!" She actually seemed mad, and he didn't know how to react to it. "If I could talk to either of them, I'd give them a piece of my mind."

"No, you don't understand, my nickname from everyone is Trashmouth." He told her softly. "I'm raunchy and I have no filter, usually at least. I usually say the F word every other word and make horrible jokes and I'm a smartass. It's why I used to get in so much trouble in school, I couldn't control my mouth."

"Mike got that way sometimes, when he was in school, and you know what?" His eyes flickered to hers for a second and then back down to his hands. "All I did was make him do extra chores, which he whined about. I never hit him, Nancy, Holly, and I would never, intentionally, hit you. Or anyone else for that matter, unless they really deserve it. It's okay that you have no filter, it's who you are. Here's a little secret about me, that the rest of you kids don't know." He looked at her so she continued. "I was a bit of a trashmouth myself when I was in school. Not around teachers or anything, because back then the *teachers* were allowed to pop you. I'd curse and curse every other word, even after I met your father because let's be honest here, who *wouldn't* curse at him or about him?" Richie chuckled wetly and wiped his eyes.

"It's kinda hard to believe you were a Trashmouth too."

"If you ever see me wine drunk you'll understand." She replied, taking his hands. "But I'm serious, Richie, it's who you are. I mean, I'd rather *not* hear you curse every other word, but I'm not asking you to change. Mike told me that you were cheery and happy all the time but you haven't exactly seemed that way."

"I just...I don't want you guys to hate me for who I am. The people in Derry? Parents, grandparents, even people my age were always judging me and acting like I was some disease that wouldn't go away." He couldn't help but role his eyes and huff a little when he said that.

"I could *never* hate you. I loved you the second I laid eyes on you, and I haven't stopped, and I won't. I'm not sure if promises mean as much

to you as they do Mike, but I promise you I will never hate you. I wouldn't hate you if you killed someone. I wouldn't like it, but I wouldn't hate you." He snickered.

If only she knew the shit I've done in my life. Dumb ass fucking clown.

"Wanna know something else?" She asked. He nodded. "You're older by six minutes." He grinned widely at that.

"Hmm, I don't think Mikey's gonna be none to happy about that." She chuckled and shook her head.

"Just wait until he finds out, his face is gonna be priceless." She said. "And one more thing, with the cursing, if you will, try not to in front of Holly or Nora? We're trying to keep them both away from it as much as possible."

"Of course." He nodded in agreement. "So, uh, thanks? I think?"

"Anytime you need to talk, I'm here, okay? It doesn't matter what time, day or night, call or come over." He nodded and smiled reaching forward and pulling her into a hug. She hugged him back tightly.

Karen let him go after a minute or two and stood, walking over to a cabinet and opening it.

"Ah ha! Here it is." She grinned and turned around, holding up a Polaroid camera. Richie snickered and stood as well, following her back up the stairs.

"Be ready." He whispered to her. She nodded, the grin never leaving her face. Richie knew he looked like he'd been crying, but he really didn't care, so he just bounded into the living room like a bat outta hell with Karen hot on his heels with matching grins. Mike, El and Eddie were squeezed on the couch now, Mike in the middle.

"Are you okay?" Eddie asked upon seeing him, while El just made a face at the two. Richie just grinned at him and looked Mike dead in the face.

"I'm older by six minutes, Mikey boy. Suck on *that*."

Flash!

Everyone, except Mike of course, laughed at the picture for the rest of the night.

24. Seeing Double, Literally

Summary for the Chapter:

> Mama Steve makes an appearance and adopts Richie and Eddie, and by default, the Losers Club.

Notes for the Chapter:

> Shit get's pretty real next chapter ;)
> Also I'm shit at replying to comments so I'm sorry! Thank you to everyone who has reviewed! I really appreciate it! <3

Saturday, June 16, 1992
6 PM

"Mike! Stop making out with your fiance and come the fuck on!" Richie yelled, throwing an arm around Eddie's shoulders as the two walked away from the car. They were going on a *double date* as El had excitedly called it, at Benny's for milkshakes, and of course, Eddie was thrilled to spend more time with her. The four just left the Wheeler's house, having had lunch with Karen, Ted, Nancy, Jonathan, Lonora and Holly and then spent the next couple hours for family photos, as Karen desperately wanted to have Richie and Eddie both in family photos, whereas Richie cried again, from happiness of course, when he was by himself for a few minutes. They'd taken multiple, with all of them, some of just the siblings and many more, Jonathan promising to print everyone a couple copies.

"Let them be, Richard."

"Spaghetti, I'm his older brother. I'm going to embarrass him in anyway possible."

"By six minutes, Richie, jeez." Eddie rolled his eyes and opened the door. Richie snickered. "Ladies first." Eddie motioned for him to walk in as he cackled and did as he was told.

"Where do you wanna sit, Eds?"

"Don't call me that. And over there in the corner." He pointed and Richie nodded, taking his hand and walking that way.

"Little Wheeler! I didn't think I'd see you until Monday!" A man with *great* hair stated happily, standing up. Richie stopped and looked at him.

"Who the fuck are you?" The man looked at him weird. "And I am by all means, not little if you know what I mean." Eddie punched him in the side

"Um..." He looked at Eddie and then saw their hands clasped together. "You're not El."

"No, I'm Eddie. Who are you?"

"Steve? Steve Harrington."

"Mama Steve?" Richie perked up at that, grinning. Steve groaned.

"Don't call me that. Jesus Christ, did you get hit in the head or something."

"Richie, leave Steve alone." Mike called, walking hand in hand with El. Steve's eyes widened.

"No, I got hit on the head. I'm seeing double, what the hell." He smacked his forehead.

"You probably did, because do you not remember Dustin talking to you for two hours and telling you about Billy getting his ass handed to him?" El asked. "And let's sit down and get out of everyone's way." Eddie nodded in agreement, tugging Richie along and to the booth they'd been heading to. They sat on one side, Mike and El sat on the other, and Steve brought up a chair.

"All he said was Mike's twin brother. He didn't say a name or anything but he said it was badass."

"He wasn't even there." Mike rolled his eyes.

"You weren't either." Richie pointed out. "You got there just in time to

pull the fucker off me. I have battle scars, dude, lookie here." He held out his fist to Steve, who saw very faint marks on his knuckles. He chuckled and shook his head. "Anyways, Richie Tozier, Mike's big brother." He grinned cheekily. "Nice to meet ya, Mama Steve."

"I'm going to kill Dustin."

"This is Eddie Spaghetti, isn't he a cutie?" Richie pinched his cheeks and Eddie slapped his hands away, scowling at him.

"Nice to meet you, Eddie." He turned to Richie. "I'm your sisters ex." Eddie made a strangled sound and covered his mouth, eyes slightly widened.

"You okay?" Richie asked immediately. Eddie nodded.

"I just realized something, holy shit." Richie raised an eyebrow. "Remember all those mom jokes you used to do? And still do?" He nodded. "And all those sister jokes I'd say back, and you didn't know you had a sister." Richie stared at him for a couple seconds. "You know, *are those birth control pills? Yeah I'm saving them for your sister.*" Mike made a face and Richie just blinked, and burst out laughing.

"Oh God." He laughed, fanning himself. "That's so gross yet so funny."

"Tell me about it."

"Why did me saying I was Nancy's ex trigger that?"

"I don't know but it did. It's weird, I haven't thought about anything from back then until now." Richie nudged his foot with his own, and Eddie eyed him.

"So, Harrington, how many times did you sneak into her room?"

"Once."

"I find that hard to believe."

"It is! Ask Mike, he saw me that one time." Steve looked over to Mike, who was distracted by El playing with his hands.

"Huh?" He looked up at them and saw the three looking at him. "What'd I miss."

"I'm kinda glad you missed some of that. Anyways, I only snuck in Nancy's window one time, and you saw me."

"Oh, nah." Steve's eyes widened. "I saw you a couple times, actually. Dude, I rode my freaking bike any time and all the time, going over to Will's and shit. I saw you a couple times, I just somehow managed to be quiet."

"Oh."

"I've walked in on you and her, *and* her and Jonathan more than I'd like to admit."

"Sucks for you little bro." Richie grinned at him.

"I'ma give you another black eye if you don't *shut up,* Richard." He held his hands up, chuckling.

"Don't get your panties in a twist, Michael, chill." Mike scowled at him.

"So what's it like being a Wheeler? Are you just as weird as Mike?"

"Okay first off-" Mike started but El just patted his shoulder and he shut up. Eddie couldn't help but snicker at that.

"I was weird when I was younger." Richie said. Eddie scoffed.

"Only when you were younger?" Richie grinned at him cheekily. "You've gotten weirder over the years. You know, the first song he ever wrote was about our secret relationship."

"Huh?" El looked at him. Eddie nodded.

"Yep. We kept our relationship from the losers for a while, because we didn't wanna break up and split the group or anything."

"Then Stan's nosy ass had to catch us making out in my car." Richie started grumbling under his breath about *stupid little bird man.*

"I'm gonna tell him you called him a stupid little bird man." Steve said. "Even though I've never met this Stan."

"Snitch." Steve snickered.

"Anyways, Dustin wants to have a little get together or something at my house tomorrow night if you guys wanna come. The other three dipshits are going and you can bring your friends too."

"Why, so you can snitch?" Richie looked at him accusingly.

"Duh. And I want to meet your friends."

"Are you gonna adopt them too?" Mike asked cheekily. Steve stared at him for a couple seconds.

"If you don't-"

"Mama Steve!" Mike and Richie *both* exclaimed, causing El and Eddie to laugh.

"To answer your question," El looked at Mike. "He's obligated to adopt Richie, seeing as he's your brother, and all his friends by default."

25. Beep Fucking Beep

Notes for the Chapter:

> So I know Richie's explanation of Penny's' bitch ass is shit but I mean, if I was Richie I wouldn't exactly word it right either so, ya know.
>
> Also, I KNOW Mike didn't actually see Bob getting mauled, so let's just say he was a curious little shit and looked through the door, yeah? XD

"I'm still a little hung up on the fact that *you* write songs." Mike said, pouting a little as he turned around to look at Richie. "Why didn't you tell me?"

"I thought you knew. What do you think's in that little notebook I carry around? My deepest darkest secrets?" He wiggled his eyebrows. "Now that I think about it it kinda is, but that's not the point. Yeah, I write a lot of the songs in our band but the other three help or write their own sometimes." Before Mike could reply, Hopper's voice came over the radio.

"Wheeler, you there?"

"How the fuck does he always know?" Richie mumbled. Mike gave him a look and answered,

"Yeah, I'm here, Hop, what's up?"

"I need you to come to the station as soon as possible."

"What happened?" El turned the car around.

"I'd rather not say over the radio, just get here quick, kid. Over and out." Mike sighed and rubbed his eyes with the palm of his hands.

"What the fuck. Can there be a day when no bullshit happens?" He grumbled.

"Do you think another kid's gone missing?" El asked, softly.

"Probably." Eddie looked at Richie, who looked right back at him.

"How many kids have gone missing?" Eddie asked.

"If it's what happened, then nine."

"How many have been found?" Richie asked.

"None."

"Holy shit." Eddie leaned forward and rested his forehead on the back of the seat.

"You alright back there?" El asked him as Richie put an arm around him, squeezing him gently.

"Derry was known for kids going missing a couple years ago." Richie told them, and neither Mike or El have seen him as serious as he is now. "None of the kids were found, and neither was the reason for them going missing. But it stopped." That obviously wasn't true, and he was doing everything he could not to tell them. They'd think he was crazy.

Oh yeah! A crazy demon clown that lived in the sewers was eating kids for lunch, and one of those kids was Bill's little brother. We went after it and put it to sleep for another twenty seven years!

"Richie." Eddie mumbled. "What if it's..." He said so quietly, Richie barely heard him.

"It's not, Eddie. It can't be."

"But..." Eddie looked at him, eyes wide with worry.

"It's not." Richie stated.

"It's not what?" Mike asked, eyebrows raised.

"Um-" Thankfully, Richie was saved from responding when El pulled into the station and Hopper was at the side of the car instantly. Mike

got out quicker than anyone thought possible, and before he could even ask, Hopper answered,

"We found a body." Mike's breath caught in his throat.

"You found a body?" He repeated.

"Yeah, we uh, we were out walking and found it."

"Who were you with?" Hopper didn't reply. "Goddammit Hopper, *who were you with*?"

"Joyce and Will."

"Oh God." He pinched the bridge of his nose as he followed the chief inside. "Where's the body?" He asked.

"Look, kid, it's not a pretty sight. I don't want you to see-"

"I saw Bob." Mike said. "I saw Bob get mauled to death." Eddie and Richie looked at each other and noticed how El's shoulders fell. "Nothing will *ever* top that. I'll be fine." Hopper sighed and nodded. His eyes flickered to Eddie and Richie.

"What about them?"

"What about them?" Mike repeated. "They can just wait in El's office, unless you want her to take you home." He said, looking at the two.

"No, it's fine. We can wait." Eddie said quickly, knowing El didn't want to leave Mike.

"What about mom and Will?" El asked.

"They're in El's office. Joyce isn't doing too well right now." He said. Mike pushed past him and walked in, where Will and Joyce were sitting in chairs next to each other, Will having wrapped an arm around her in an attempt to comfort her.

"Hey." Mike crouched in front of her and grabbed her hands. "You okay?" He knew she wasn't. She shook her head.

"It was worse than Bob." She whispered. "I don't want you to see it."

"Joyce... I need to."

"No, you don't." She shook her head again. "Not up close and personal like I did."

"I'll look at pictures, then, okay? Come here." He pulled her into a hug. "I'm sorry you had to see it."

"Are you okay with Richie and Eddie sitting in here with us?" El asked. Joyce and Will nodded. "I'll take it from here, Mike, just go with dad." Mike nodded and stood up, giving Eddie and Richie an apologetic look and a kiss on the cheek to El, before following Hopper back down the hall. El sat at her desk and Eddie and Richie sat on the couch in the corner.

"Who is Bob?" Eddie asked.

"He uh, he was an old boyfriend of mine." Joyce told them. No one said anything for a few minutes after, and eventually they heard Hopper say,

"Kid, I *told* you it wasn't a pretty sight." It sounded like someone gagged and they knew it was Mike.

"You didn't tell me the bottom half of her body was missing!" He exclaimed. "It'd have been a lot easier if you *mentioned it.*"

"Betty Ribsom." Richie muttered, quiet, but loud enough for the others to hear.

"What about her?" Eddie asked.

"I...me and Bill...we saw her." He told him quietly. "Half of her body was missing too."

"Oh my God." Mike was loud again. "This was Holly's best friend. What the hell, Hop? How am I supposed to tell her her best friend is dead? This is like Barb all over again, but this time she was actually found!"

"Who's Barb?" Eddie asked.

"She was Nancy's best friend." Will told him. "She went missing right around the same time I did but she was never found." They went silent and just listened to Mike and Hopper speaking a couple doors down.

"Is this a balloon?" Hopper asked. Mike looked at the picture closely and saw that there was a string wrapped around her wrist, a popped balloon connected to it.

"Yeah but why...Wait." He paused and looked at Hopper. "Fuck. El!" He yelled. She got up quickly and met him in the hall. "I need you to call mom's house and talk to Holly. Ask her if that guy had a balloon that day, because I think he had a balloon and it popped."

"Richie..." Eddie said, hesitantly.

"It's gotta be a coincidence, Eds, it can't be. It's only been seven years." Eddie just took a deep breath and nodded, listening as El walked back down the hall towards her office. She sat at her desk and picked up the phone, dialing the number quickly. A couple seconds later, Karen answered.

"Hello?"

"Hey, Karen, is Holly around? I really need to speak to her."

"Of course, hold on." She heard her call Holly and then said, "She's coming downstairs now."

"Okay, thank you."

"Here she is."

"Hello?"

"Holly, hey, I have an important question."

"What is it?"

"That day you and Mike were looking for Dustin's cat, that creepy

clown guy, did he try to offer you a balloon?" Eddie's breath caught in his throat and he squeezed Richie's hands tightly.

"Yeah, it was a red balloon." Holly told her. "He was really creepy. Did Mike tell you what he looked like?"

"No, he didn't, what did he look like?"

"He had a big head and red hair." She said. "And his costume was really dirty and he had buck teeth and like, yellow looking eyes."

"Yellow eyes? What else was weird about him?"

"He was slobbering and that's gross."

"Yeah, slobber is gross."

"He also said beep beep Richie to Mike."

"Why would he say beep beep to Mike?"

"I don't know, Mike cursed at him and then he disappeared."

"Beep fucking beep." Richie growled and El looked at him, alarmed. "Goddammit, mother fucker!" He exclaimed, standing up and kicking the trashcan next to him.

"Thanks, Holly, stay inside okay? I'll call you later." She hung up before Holly could respond. "Richie, what the hell?" Mike and Hopper came in then, Mike was a little pale.

"What's going on in here?"

"Why didn't you tell me about the clown?" Richie demanded. "Why didn't you tell us it said beep beep Richie?"

"I didn't think it was important? What's wrong, Richie?" Richie sat back down next to Eddie and gripped at his hair, mumbling under his breath.

"Fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, *fuck*. Eddie, what're we gonna do?"

"We need to tell everyone else." He said simply, like only moments

ago he wasn't terrified.

"What the *fuck* is going on?" Joyce, shockingly, spoke up. "Don't just freak out over there and then not tell us what's wrong."

"I'm sorry, we just... You wouldn't believe us if we told you." Eddie told her, and then looked at everyone else.

"You'd be surprised." Will said, raising an eyebrow.

"That clown..." Richie said, looking up at them. "That clown shouldn't be here. It should be back in Derry's sewers, fucking hibernating for the next twenty years." Everyone around him looked completely and utterly confused. "It's a demon from some other dimension, that feeds on fear and children. It's what killed all those kids we talked about earlier, killed Bill's little brother. Tried to kill *us*. It would turn into your biggest fear." They stared at him for a good two minutes, before Will said,

"Yep, not the strangest thing we've heard."

"You believe me?" Richie asked, surprised.

"I was stuck in another dimension for a week and then possessed by a monster, so I definitely believe you."

26. Pennywise in All His Buck Teeth Glory

While everything went down at the station, Max was closing the arcade early, as she was going out to dinner with Lucas tonight. Well, she *was.* Until she saw a red balloon float by the door. She poked her head out and looked around.

"Hey! It's closing time, whoever's here needs to leave!" She called out. She heard a giggle and rolled her eyes. "I hear you giggling, Lucas. This isn't funny!" She walked out of the room and down each isle, waiting for him to pop out. "Lucas!" She sighed and turned around but stopped dead in her tracks. Billy was standing behind her, holding the red balloon with a smile on his face.

"B-Billy? What a-are you doing h-here?" She stuttered, taking a few steps backwards until she was against the wall. He grinned, two of his bottom front teeth were missing.

"Oh, you know, just visiting my little sister at work." He giggled. "I'm still mad at that... Richie." His grin grew bigger, creepier. He stepped closer, reaching out for her. "Richie is gonna regret it."

He was about to grab her when the door opened and Lucas walked in. The balloon popped and Billy disappeared.

"Max!" He called. He walked around the corner and saw her against the wall, hugging herself. She saw him and let out a breath of relief and ran to him. She hugged him as if her life depended on it and he hugged her back. "Hey, whoa, what happened?"

"Billy. He...He was here. He had a red balloon." Her eyes were wide and her breathing quickened. "Said Richie would regret it." He put his hands on her shoulders, squeezing gently.

"Max, calm down. Billy's in jail, remember?" She shook her head.

"He was here, Lucas." She looked at him, eyes watering. He hugged her again. "He had a red balloon and it popped and he was gone."

"Just now?" She nodded into his chest. "Let's lock up and we'll go over

to Mike and El's, okay? We'll talk to Mike about it." She nodded and took a shuddering breath. He had to lock up for her, as her hands were shaking too much. He drove with one hand on the steering wheel, his other gripping Max's tightly. This was *not* how he planned tonight to go.

How in the fuck was he there? Maybe she was sleep walking or something. She's known to do that, right? Oh, we're here-Wait, their car isn't in the driveway.

"Their car isn't in the drive way." He said out loud, half expecting her to reply with a sarcastic comment.

"Shit, they-they've been at the Wheeler's all day, I think." She told him. He nodded and headed that way. Their car wasn't there either, so the two got out and walked up to the door. Lucas knocked and Holly opened it with a grin.

"Hey! What are you two doing here?" She asked, motioning for them to come in. Then she realized how upset Max was. "Are you okay, Max?"

"Yeah, I just, I need to talk to your brother. Do you know where he is?" Holly fought back the urge to ask which brother, even though she knew exactly who.

"Oh! Something happened so he and El had to go into work today. They should be at the station. Eddie and Richie are their too." Max stiffened.

"Do you know what happened?" Lucas asked. She shrugged.

"I'm not sure, El called and asked me about the guy me and Mike saw in the woods a couple weeks ago when we were looking for Tews. You know, Dustin told me his name last week. Anyway, she asked me if the clown guy had a balloon. I don't know why." Max began shaking all over, eager to make a run for the car and drive to the station.

"A clown?" He asked, vividly remembering his dreams. "What color balloons?"

"Red."

"Shit." He swore. "Um, thanks Holly, we really need to talk to Mike. Don't worry though okay?" She nodded, confusion written all across her face. "And be careful, don't go outside alone." She nodded again and walked them out the door. They literally ran to the car and were on their way to the station when they saw Eddie and Richie walking down the sidewalk, probably on their way back to Bev's house. Lucas slowed to a stop next to them and rolled down the window.

"Hey guys!" He called, and they both jumped, then sighed in relief and walked over to the car. "Is Mike and El at the station still? It's important." They both nodded. Richie pointed them both in the face.

"Don't go *anywhere* alone. Stay together and if you see a red balloon, fucking run. Understand? We're having a meeting at Bev's in an hour." Richie stated. Max's eyes widened.

"What the fuck is up with these red balloons? First my dreams, and then what Max saw at the arcade?"

"You've seen IT?" Eddie piped up, eyes wide.

"I saw Billy." She said. She contemplated telling Richie what he said, and decided she should. "He said that you would regret it. I thought he meant the fight but... He's supposed to be in jail."

"That wasn't Billy." Richie said. "Look, don't go to the station, just go pick up Dustin. We'll explain everything when everyone's there." Lucas nodded and drove off. Richie and Eddie continued walking in silence. There was a question weighing on Richie's mind, something that'd been looming over him for a couple days now, but before he got a chance to say anything, there was a loud giggle coming from behind them. They both froze and slowly turned around. A couple yards away stood Pennywise in all his red haired, buck teeth glory, his signature red balloons in one hand.

"R-Richie." He tugged on Richie's hand.

"Where ya off to?" Pennywise asked, giggling.

"Richie." Eddie tugged on his hand again, blinking rapidly, believing

he was just seeing things, even though he *knew* it was real. It was happening.

"Cat got your tongue, Richie?" Pennywise asked, tilting his head to the side, his grin growing by the second.

"Eddie, run." Richie hissed. He glanced down at him.

"I'm not leaving-"

"You better run, Eds. He told you to run." Giggles.

"I'll be right behind you. *Run.*" Eddie reluctantly let his hand go and ran in the direction they came from. He heard Pennywise giggling and then heard running footsteps behind him, hoping and praying they were Richie's. They were. They didn't stop running until they were on the front porch, and of course, the door was locked.

"Open the fucking door!" Richie yelled, banging on the door with both fists while Eddie tried to catch his breath, looking around them for any sign of Pennywise.

"What the hell?" Mike H opened the door and the two ran inside. Richie slammed the door and leaned against it, breathing hard.

"Chee..." Eddie wheezed. Quickly, Richie grabbed the inhaler from his pocket and put it up to Eddie's lips and he took a puff.

"What the fuck, guys? What happened?" Bev asked, walking up to them. Eddie's breath quickened again and took another puff.

"IT-" Richie's eyes widened and then he covered his mouth, running to the bathroom. He barely made it to the bathroom without gagging. He fell onto his knees by the toilet and gagged.

Nothing came up the first time, only a sound that even Richie found disgusting. He coughed, before gagging once again, and he felt the contents of his stomach empty all at once, causing forced tears to leak out of his eyes. He felt his glasses slipping from his face, but he didn't have time to push them back up before he was gagging again, coughing hysterically. For a few seconds, he thought it was the end, before his stomach convulsed once again and he was spilling

whatever was left from his stomach into the toilet.

During all this, he felt someones hand rubbing his back, and when he sat up slightly, they took his glasses off and set them on the sink. It was Bev.

"Eddie?" He whispered.

"The guys are in the living room with him. You know how they are, can't handle a little puke." Richie would have laughed if it was under different circumstances. "He's fine though, just still catching his breath." She put a hand on his cheek, using her other hand to push his hair out of his eyes. "What happened, Rich?" She asked softly. He swallowed, making a grabby motion towards the toilet paper. She handed him a wad of it and he wiped his eyes and then his mouth and flushed it. He didn't want to say it. He made a move to get up and she stood up, taking his hands and helping him up. Wrapping an arm around his back, she led him back out into the living room and he sat beside Eddie, wrapping his arms around him.

"Are you okay?" Eddie asked him softly. Richie nodded.

"You guys look like you've seen a ghost." Mike H said, sitting on the other couch.

"You could say that." Richie mumbled.

"We...We saw IT." Eddie said, biting his lip.

"Saw what?" Ben asked, confused.

"IT, guys, IT."

"IT as in..." Richie and Eddie both nodded and Bill's face went pale. "B-But it hasn't b-been twenty seven years y-yet." His stutter was back.

"Guys... All those missing children, was because of IT. We confirmed it only a little while ago." Eddie told them.

"IT was there, on the side walk." Richie took his glasses off and threw them on the coffee table, running a hand through his hair and over

his face. He sat up, leaning forward on his knees, covering his face with his hands. "What the fuck. One of the missing kids, Holly's best friend, was apparently torn in half. Like Betty Ripsom, Bill."

"Are you sure it was IT?" Stan asked nervously. Eddie nodded this time, squeezing Richie's shoulder gently.

"Positive." Because Richie was physically unable to admit the fact that his little sister had come face to face with Pennywise, Mike had told them the story, Eddie filled them in on everything that happened in the last hour. "We both saw it, so it wasn't just our imaginations." He finished.

"But how? It's been seven years." Bev asked, looking at Bill.

"It seems to me that we're not the only small town group of friends that's had to deal with fucking demons." Richie said. "Will said something about being trapped in some other dimension and then getting possessed. I don't know, it's all he said. They're coming over in like an hour and we're gonna talk."

27. Explanation Part One

Notes for the Chapter:

shinyzomi- Yep! :)

Walking up the drive way, Dustin dug around in his pockets, trying to find his keys. He'd just come back from a run, yeah, he actually did physical activity now.

"Son of a bitch, I know I didn't-Ha! Found ya." He grinned, looking at his keys. He fumbled around with them until he found the right one and walked up to the door, unlocking it. He was about to open it when he heard a loud bang coming from the trashcan. "What the hell?" He walked over to it and it rattled as he got closer. "There better not be another Dart, I swear." He went to lift the lid but it flew off on it's own and he fell backwards, barely dodging the lid. A scream caught in his throat when he saw demodog jump out of the trashcan, followed by multiple red balloons. "What the fuck!" He exclaimed, scrambling back as the demodog growled at him. He heard a car door slam and the balloons popped and the demodog ran off. There as the sound of a car door slamming and,

"Dustin!" Lucas exclaimed, running over to him. "What the hell? Was that a-"

"Demodog." Dustin interrupted. "Oh my God, oh my God." Breathing hard, he took Lucas' hand and let him pull him up. Then Max ran up to them.

"Are you okay?" She asked. He nodded and swallowed harshly.

"What the hell just happened?" Lucas asked, cautiously walking over to the trashcan. He looked inside and there was nothing.

"I-I don't know. It just jumped out at me."

"It just disappeared into thin air." Max told them.

"What the fuck." He mumbled. "There were red balloons in the trashcan." Max and Lucas looked at each other.

"Come on." Max grabbed his wrist.

"What? Where are we going?" Dustin asked. "I have to lock the door!" He whined. Lucas rolled his eyes and took the keys, running and locking the front door before joining them in the car. He sped down the road as Max filled him in as best she could.

"You know, I thought this bullshit was over after El closed the gate." He grumbled.

"This is completely different." Max said, rolling her eyes. "I don't think this clown fucker is from the Upside Down. Maybe another dimension?"

"Is there even another dimension IT could come from?" Dustin asked.

"I don't fuckin' now. Do I look like someone who knows fuck all about demons and dimensions?" Dustin glared at her.

"Alright you two, we're here. Calm the fuck down." Lucas said, getting out of the car. El was waiting for them at the door.

"Everyone's here, including Will, dad, and mom."

"Why?" Lucas asked as she shut the door behind him. She didn't reply, just led the three into the dinning room, where the losers, sans Richie, Joyce and Hopper were sitting. Richie was pacing back and forth, muttering to himself and looking out the window every chance he got. Mike stood up when the three walked in.

"Richie, stop pacing. Everyone's here." Mike told him. Richie just scowled but stopped, standing next to his brother. Everyone stared at the two, waiting for one of them to start talking.

"Will, do you want to tell them what you remember?" Hopper asked him, breaking the silence. He shrugged and nodded.

"I didn't remember much then, so I don't remember as much now. That night we were at Mike's playing D and D, a ten hour campaign. We had to leave because of our bedtimes and such, and we always rode our bikes. Our house is farthest from Mikes, out of all of us, so I was on my own. I was on Mirkwood when this huge figure appeared

in the middle of the road, and I turned my bike so hard I fell, and instead of getting back on it, I just ran home. I locked all the doors in the house but it tried to get in, so I went out to the shed and loaded the shotgun out there. The light in the shed got really bright and the Demogorgon got me. It's really fuzzy after that, I just remember talking to El at some point."

"Demogorgon? Like in D and D?" Mike H asked. He nodded.

"It's just what we called it. It didn't have an actual name so..." Dustin shrugged.

"What happened next?" Ben asked.

Mike sighed, looking at Hopper and El for confirmation. He heard El's voice inside his head.

Go on and tell them everything. One of us will add in anything you miss.

"Well, I'm gonna start from the beginning. It *all* started in 1983, the night Will went missing..." To the Party, it reminded them of how Mike would be during D and D, getting into his story telling. "Dustin, Lucas and I went out in the woods the next night to look for him. I'll never forget that night, we were terrified twelve year olds looking for their friend. Instead of finding Will, we found El. Thought she was a boy at first, because she had a shaved head. I took her in and hid her in the basement for a week. That fort you guys saw down there, " He looked at Richie, then Eddie, "Is the same fort she stayed in. I'm not sure if you guys heard about it or actually saw it at any point, but there's a lab, Hawkins lab over near Mirkwood." They already knew all about that. "El was raised there, as an experiment. Her real name would have been Jane Ives, but she was known as subject eleven her entire life. When I brought her home, she didn't talk hardly at all, only a few words. They didn't teach her."

"Why were you raised in a lab?" Stan asked her.

"I'm telekinetic." She told them. "I can move things with my mind, see?"She turned her gaze to an empty mug on the counter and floated it over to them, setting it down in front of Bill. Wide eyed, he tried to pick it up but she kept it there.

"Holy s-shit." He muttered.

"That's so fucking cool." Richie whispered. He looked at Mike, "Why didn't you tell me she was so cool?" He whined. Mike rolled his eyes, a ghost of a smile playing at his lips.

"Didn't exactly feel the need to until now."

"Martin Brenner was the man behind it all. There were at *least* eleven subjects, and I only know one other, eight, who goes by Kali. He made us call him Papa and wanted to use us as weapons overseas. There were so many different tests he made me do." She explained some of the tests, including the ones that involved the bath and how it worked. "I can find people, with my mind. If I have a blindfold, an empty TV station or a radio, I can find anyone, as long as I have a picture or just know what they look like."

"I gave her a nickname, El." El gave him a smile and he continued. He gave them the same explanation about the flea as Mr. Clarke had, about the Upside Down and El, as best she could, Dustin and Lucas gave their own recollection of the week, along with Hopper and Joyce and how they went in the Upside Down and saved Will.

"Three hundred and fifty three days was how long I was gone." She said, after Mike told them about her killing the Demogorgan.

"In the Upside Down?" Eddie asked, confused. She shook her head.

"No, I *was* there when I woke up, but I managed to get out before the little gate way closed. I went to Mike's but the lab was still after me and there were police cars surrounding his house, so I left. I lived in the woods for a while, until Hopper, dad, found me and took me in."

"I called her every night, with my supercom."

"For three hundred and fifty three days, I heard him call out. At the beginning I didn't, but I kept count with him. I couldn't leave the cabin, *at all* the entire time, and I understand now why." She looked at Hopper, who gave her a tight smile.

By the time they finished telling their story, everyone butting in and adding their parts, the Losers were shocked.

"The fact that you had the idea to set tunnels on fire is badass." Richie said, clapping Mike on the back. He rolled his eyes.

"Nancy and Jonathan had a big part in it too, but I don't want them involved in this if I can help it." He said, and the others nodded in agreement.

Then, the phone rang.

28. Explanation Part Two

Everyone jumped at the sudden noise, and stared at the phone. After a couple beats, Bev answered it.

"Hello?"

"Bev! Bev, is Mike there? Please tell me he is. I've called his house, the station, mom and dad's house and I can't get a hold of him." Nancy told her, voice urgent.

"Uh, yeah, he is. Mike? It's Nancy..."

"Fuck." He cursed and grabbed the phone.

"Nancy?"

"Mike? Oh my God, Mike I saw Barb. I fucking saw Barb and she started blaming me for her death and yelling at me. She was holding a red balloon and tried to take Nora and I don't think I remember how to breath right? What the fuck, am I going crazy?"

"Son of a bitch. Look, do NOT let her out of your sight, understand? Is Jonathan there?"

"No, he went to the store, Mike, what's going on?"

"I'll explain when I get there. Keep Nora with you. I'll be there in a few minutes." He slammed the phone down and kicked the trashcan. "Fuck, fuck, fuck." He let out a loud groan and snatched the car keys off the table.

"What happened, kid?" Hopper asked.

"Whatever the fuck it is taking kids has tried to take Nora."

"What?" Richie's voice cracked.

"It turned into Barb and started blaming her for her death or something, I don't know, I've gotta go get them." He said, sprinting out the door.

"What about staying together?" Dustin yelled after him, but Mike was already in the car and driving away.

"Goddamn it!" Richie kicked a chair. "Why the fuck does this mother fucking clown *want* with us? Why couldn't it just fucking *die*?" He plopped down in a chair and gripped his hair.

It was at least twenty minutes before Mike got back, with Nancy and Nora on his heels.

"So I left a note for Jonathan so if he sees it anytime soon he'll come over." Mike told them as he shut and locked the door behind him. "I explained to Nancy as best I could on the way here but she's still freaked out and doesn't really understand what's going on so she wasn't exactly paying me any attention. She just kept checking and rechecking Nora to make sure she was okay and-"

"Mike," El put her hands on his shoulders. He shut his mouth and looked at her. "Breathe." He'd barely taken a breath since he walked in. He took a deep breath and gave her a nod.

"Sorry."

"Nance, let me take her. Calm down for a minute okay?" Richie told her, gently prying her hands from Nora's shirt. He hugged the little girl to his chest and she laid her head down, gripping his shirt in her tiny fists.

"I want someone to explain to *why the fuck* Not-Barb tried to take my baby." Nancy said, crossing her arms.

"To put it simply, Pennywise is a demon from some other dimension, that feeds off children and fear. We call it IT instead of Pennywise." Mike H. said.

"Don't give IT the satisfaction." Richie muttered.

"IT wakes up every twenty seven years, feeds for a year, and then goes back to sleep." Ben said. "IT was supposed to *only* be in Derry, but apparently not."

"It's o-o-only been s-seven years."

"Lucky Seven my ass. I'd say, seven is the unluckiest number I've ever heard. But that's just my opinion." Richie shrugged, swaying a bit with Lonora in his arms.

"Beep-" Stan started but Richie stopped him.

"Don't." His tone was demanding, and as was his glare. "Don't say it." Stan glared at him, but then his eyes softened.

"Sorry, Rich."

"Do you think IT could have been coming through the gate?" Bev asked. "Or *a* gate?"

"Could there have been another gate there?" Dustin asked. She started to shrug, then froze.

"Wait." She muttered, staring off into space. She sat there, unblinking, until Lucas gave her a nudge. "What did the gate look like?" She asked, looking at El.

"Uh, it started off small, and grew over the year. When I closed it, it was huge, moving, *growling.* It was like a mind of it's own. You couldn't just...*look* into the Upside Down, there was some gooey substance between the Right Side Up and Upside Down, so you couldn't see through it clearly. The goo itself looked like there was fire behind it, or some kind of bright light."

"What I saw in the sewers the day we fought IT," Bev said, looking at the rest of the Losers, "IT said something...something like, *you'll laugh, you'll cry, you cheer, you die* and then... then started dancing? The background though it-it looked kind of like she described but there *was* fire. It looked like a tunnel going straight to hell."

"That's what the gate looked like." Hopper said. "But without the fire part."

"When did you close the gate, El?" Ben asked.

"November of '84." Mike answered for her.

"We f-fought IT in the s-summer of '85." Bill said. "B-but h-h-how

would the g-g-ga-ga-"

"Gate." Bev said helpfully, taking his hand.

"How w-would the g-gate be open t-there a-and clo-closed here?" No one knew the answer to that, so no one said anything. Mike broke the silence.

"Uh, maybe..." He sighed and ran a hand through his hair. "No, no, never mind."

"What? We'll take all the help we can get here, Wheeler." Max said, crossing her arms. He glared at the use of his last name.

"It's unlikely but... what if when El closed the gate, it made *other* gates across the world close? Like maybe it just took some time but they closed? Maybe that's what happened in Derry." Everyone looked at each other and shrugged.

"It's a possibility, I guess." Dustin told him.

"It could have closed before IT went back inside." Richie said out of nowhere. "Maybe IT's trapped in the Right Side Up. Maybe *that's* why the fucker is here. Maybe IT wants you to open the gate back up."

"But why would IT want to go back?" Eddie asked.

"Why do *you* want to go back to Derry?" He retorted. Eddie blinked at him, his eyebrows furrowing. "That's a genuine, legitimate question, Eds. Why do you want to go back to Derry?"

"Because of my mom, I guess?" Richie nodded, and looked at the others.

"You all have *something* to go back to Derry for. The *only* reason I'm even considering going back is for you guys and my band. If it weren't for that, I'd stay here, in Hawkins. There's something IT is wanting to go back to in the Upside Down. There has to be a reason IT's here, and not just because of us."

"Eh, down." Lonora squirmed, wanting to get down. He put her down and she walked over to Hopper, who scooped her up immediately.

Are you sure about that, Richie?

"What the fuck?" Richie's eyes widened.

"What?" Will asked.

"You guys didn't hear that?" He asked.

"Hear what?" Dustin raised his eyebrows.

How can you be so sure about me, when you're not even sure about yourself?

"Get out of my head." He growled, squeezing his eyes shut.

There's nothing I want from my home. I want the reason my home is gone.

"No."

Eleven is very strong, very strong indeed. She will be mine to feed on. I will feed on her fear. Eleven will make Pennywise very powerful.

"She's stronger than you." Richie hissed, "She's stronger than you. Get the *fuck* out of my head you goddamn crackhead!" He yelled out of no where, causing everyone to jump. He opened his eyes and spun in a circle, eyes landing on the red balloon floating outside through the window, and then to the hand holding it. Pennywise stood there, a menacing grin on his face. He wrenched open the back door and stormed onto the porch. "Go fuck up someone else's life! You can't have her!"

"Richie!" Mike yelled, racing after him, El following him out the door. The rest of the Losers followed close behind, the other's watching out the window or door.

I'll kill all of you! I'll feed on your fear, you'll float too, Richie. You'll all float.

"You can't have them." His voice was eerily too calm, too serious. "You have to kill *me* before you *touch* them."

"You'd die for them, Richie." Pennywise giggled. "But you wanted to die for your own selfish reasons." He tilted his head to the side, eyes glowing. Richie was frozen in place, unable to even blink. "Death is a shadow that always follows the body."

The one balloon popped, Pennywise disappeared, and everything went black.

29. El's Encounter

Notes for the Chapter:

> Here's, well, a plot twist. Lol Nora.
>
> Also, the italics and regular format are the way they're supposed to be. Italics are what only Richie and El hear and the regular is what is heard through the TV.

"Shit!" Mike exclaimed, rushing forward and catching Richie before he hit the ground. He had his arms hooked under Richie's, and looked behind him. "A little help here. He might be a stick like me but goddamn he's heavy." Ben ran over and picked up Richie's legs, and the two carried him back in the house, placing him on the couch. Mike knelt next to him and checked his pulse, it was weaker than he liked, but there all the same. His breathing seemed regular, like he was only sleeping.

"Is he dead?" Dustin squeaked. Mike shook his head.

"No, just unconscious." Eddie joined him and knelt next to Richie, taking his hand in his. Nancy leaned over the back of the couch, pulling Richie's glasses off and setting them on the table next to her. She flicked a curl out of his face.

"Who was he talking about?" She asked softly. Everyone had squeezed into the living room, worried about him. "IT can't have who?"

"He kept saying she was stronger than you." Lucas said, making a face. "To IT, I mean."

"Is it the same her? Or like, two different ones?" Dustin asked. Lucas flicked him in the head.

"Pretty sure it's just one person." He rolled his eyes.

"Do you think IT could've been talking about Nora?" Joyce asked.

"I don't think so." Stan shook his head. "No offense but I don't think she's particularly stronger than him."

"Chee Chee." Nora whispered, poking Richie's cheek. "Ma why he not waking up?" She looked at Nancy, pouting. El picked her up and set her on her hip, giving Nancy a small smile, silently telling her she'd take care of it. She went in the kitchen. "Chee Chee!" She whined, pointing back at the living room.

"He's not feeling good, Nora." El told her softly, sitting her on the counter in front of her. "He'll be okay and can play with you later, okay?" She pouted again but nodded.

"When did she start calling him that?" Bev asked.

"Earlier today." Eddie told her, running a hand through Richie's hair.

"It's cute." She replied. He nodded. Mike stood up and started pacing, biting his lip and stopping every few seconds.

"Is Mike pacing again?" El called.

"Yeah!" The Party called back.

"Tell him to stop, he's gonna end up like dad."

"Hey!" Hopper grumbled, sticking his tongue out at her. Mike continued pacing though, ignoring everyone else.

In the kitchen, El was trying to keep Nora entertained, and Nancy and Max joined her.

"The fact that Jonathan hasn't come over yet kind of freaks me out." Nancy muttered, twirling a piece of Nora's hair on her finger.

"I can go into the void and look for him." El suggested. Before Nancy could reply, Nora pointed at El's stomach and looked up at her.

"Baby." She stated. El made a face. "Baby." She repeated. El looked at the other two, who had wide eyes.

"But I'm not..." She trailed off, making a face again. "I'm on the pill."

"Those aren't a hundred percent accurate, El." Max pointed out.

"You don't use condoms?" Nancy asked, inwardly cringing at the question.

"No, we do." El nodded. "I mean, there have been a few times we haven't used one but not like, recently recent."

"While you three are in there talking about whether or not you use condoms, we think Richie is waking up." Lucas called, loudly. There were a few grossed out sounds and a *shut the fuck up* from Mike, who sounded irritated out the ass. El groaned and let Nancy take Nora.

"I'm not pregnant." She muttered to them, and then went in the living room with a red face. Mike looked too done with everything to be embarrassed about anything, as he knelt next to Richie, who's eyeballs were constantly moving under his eyelids and he was twitching. Almost as suddenly as it started, it stopped and he stopped moving all together, other than the rise and fall of his chest.

"Dammit." Mike muttered.

"Why were you talking about condoms?" Dustin asked. El blinked at him.

"Baby." Nora pointed at El again, like she knew what Dustin meant, which made him make a face. Mike's gaze snapped towards her, along with everyone else, who had wide eyes.

"I'm not pregnant, guys." She sighed. "I don't know *why* she keeps saying that, but I'm not."

"Soon." Nora huffed and buried her face in Nancy's shoulder. Mike stared at El and she blinked, furrowing her eyebrows for a couple seconds.

"Yeah, no. Not pregnant. Just had my period. Anyways, I'm gonna see if I can find Jonathan." She said matter of factly. "Mike, do you have my bandanna?" It was the one Lucas had gotten her for her first Christmas. He nodded silently and took it out of his pocket, tossing it to her. She sat in front of the TV and turned it out, switching it to an empty channel. She tied the bandanna around her head and sat still.

"Everyone needs to be quiet." Hopper told them, and they nodded.

After a couple minutes of concentration, El opened her eyes (in the void) and saw nothing at first. She stood, the only sound being the splashing water against her feet.

"Jonathan?" She whispered. Suddenly, he appeared, but he seemed to be talking to someone. Laughing and talking to someone.

He must still be at the store, *El thought,* he always takes forever at the store, talking to old people.

"El?" El jumped, looking around. Jonathan appeared and Richie took a step towards her.

"Richie?"

"What's going on?"

"You see me?" She asked.

"Uh, yeah? Where the fuck are we?"

"The void." She replied. "You...You're unconscious."

"That explains why I hear people talking about condoms then." He said, crossing his arms.

"You heard that?" She asked out loud. Everyone looked around, confused. "Your niece wants a cousin."

"That's nice." Richie's voice could be heard next, through the TV?

"What the hell?" Ben made a face and Bev shushed him.

"You and Mike get it on a lot then, huh?"

"Oh shut it. Why are you here?"

"Why are you here?"

"I was looking for Jonathan. Making sure he was okay."

"Is this a dream or something?" Richie asked.

"I just said we're in the void, Richie. It's not a dream. I don't know why-"

"Eleven, nice of you to join us." Pennywise giggled. "I told you I'd get her, Richie." Everything froze in that moment.

"Where are you, mother fucker! Show yourself!" Richie yelled into the darkness.

"I don't think you'd want me to do that, Richie. Then I could take Eleven away forever." Pennywise's voice echoed loudly in the darkness, and through the TV. "Would you like to know something?"

"I'd like to know who the fuck your mother fucked to make you." Dustin couldn't help but snort at that and Max elbowed him.

"What if you hadn't saved Mike that day, Eleven? Do you know what would have happened if you didn't stop his fall?"

"What fall?" Richie asked.

"Oh, didn't they tell you? Little Mikey tried to kill himself too."

"No he didn't." Richie said, voice wavering.

"Oh? See for yourself. But this is what would have happened if you hadn't saved him."

In front of Mike and Richie, a background appeared, the quarry, and four boys stood there. It was Mike, Dustin, Troy and James. Troy had his knife at Dustin's throat, and Mike stood at the edge.

"Mike don't!" Dustin's voice yelled through the TV. Dustin cringed at that. "Mike!" His voice sounded desperate.

Mike looked down at the water and hesitantly stepped closer.

"Do it!" Troy hissed. Mike didn't hesitate this time, he took one more step and he disappeared over the edge.

"MIKE!" Dustin screamed. "NO!"

A scream of her own caught in her throat as she watched Mike hit the water.

"You know what, Eleven? What you see is what really happened. The last few years are all in your head. None of it's true."

"You're lying." She turned to look at Richie but he was gone. She let out a sob.

"As for Richie? He's as good as gone too. His parents didn't want him. His adoptive parents didn't want him. He's a burden."

"El!" Richie gasped, sitting straight up on the couch. Everyone jumped and a few let out startled shrieks of their own. He scrambled up, rushing over to her and yanking the blindfold off her. She let out a wail.

"Gone!" She cried. "He's gone!"

"No, no, no, El. He's right here. IT was trying to get in your head." Richie told her, gripping her shoulders. "Open your eyes, El. Look at me." She sobbed. Mike, who had been in complete shock, unfroze and ran over to them, falling to his knees and pulling them both into a hug.

"I'm here, El. It wasn't real. Whatever IT showed you was *not* real. I promise." She sobbed harder, gripping their shirts in her fists. "El, baby *please* look at me." It took a couple tries but she managed to open her eyes, and they flickered between them.

"You're both here." She whispered.

"IT wasn't real." Richie told her softly. "Mike's here, I'm here, everyone's here." She let go of their shirts and touched their cheeks, slowly moving them up into their hair.

"Thank God." She shuddered, pulling them closer as she cried. They sat there for a few minutes, but the moment was broken when Jonathan stormed in, swearing up a storm. Had it really been that long?

"What the *fuck* is going on? Where-" He broke off and hugged Nancy

and Nora. "Goddammit you scared me. Why are you three on the floor? Why is El's face covered in blood?" Mike and Richie looked at her, and noticed the blood dripping from both nostrils. Everything was blurry as fuck to Richie, but he could tell what it was. He looked at Jonathan and squinted at him.

"Boy oh boy, have you missed a lot Johnny boy."

30. Bev the Bitch

Summary for the Chapter:

> Richard is definitely not a happy camper. You have the most annoying fucking demon to thank for that. Richverly isn't exactly on good terms right now, folks, and honestly, neither is anyone else.

"Where are my glasses?" Richie asked, twisting around, looking for Eddie as if he had the answer, which, he did. He twisted a little too far and fell on his butt. "Oh shit." Mike shook his head at him, a ghost of a smile playing on his lips.

"Here, Chee." Eddie put his glasses on for him and then wrapped his arms around him. "Stop fucking running face first into danger you dumbass." Richie snorted.

"Someone has to." He shrugged. He looked over at El who had wrapped herself around Mike the way Nora did, and refused to let him go.

"Let's get you cleaned up, yeah?" Mike whispered to her. She nodded but made no move to get up. He sighed and looked at Richie, who stood and helped Mike up, all the while El clung to his body.

"I have some baby wipes you can use." Eddie offered, unzipping his fanny pack and handing the pack to Mike.

"Thanks." He nodded to him and sat on the couch. He managed to get El to sit back far enough that he could wipe the blood off, but she held on to his shoulders the whole time. Richie sat next to them, and Eddie sat beside him, grabbing his hand.

"Hey, short stuff, it's all good, we're both here. Though I'm surprised you're not tired of me yet." Richie joked, poking her shoulder. She looked over at him, tears welling up in her eyes again. "Did I say something?" He asked, eyes wide, as she buried her face in Mike's

shoulder.

"Not tired of you." She said, hiccuping. "IT is wrong. We want you."

"I know, shorty." She scowled at him. "The only thing that freaked me out, other than the shadow death shit, is watching Mike hit the water." He shivered at that.

"I didn't hit the water though?" Mike made a face.

"IT can show us whatever IT wants us to see." Bev said. "Our biggest fear. He showed her hers." Mike moved a hand to her hair, threading his fingers through it.

"Can someone explain to me what's going on here?" Jonathan asked.

"L-long story or short story?" Bill asked.

"Short."

"Clown." Richie said.

"Long story."

"Demon clown." Dustin said. Jonathan rolled his eyes and Mike H patted his back and told him everything that's happened so far.

"Hey Richie?" Bev asked. He looked at her, eyebrows raised. "Um, what did IT mean when IT said...said you wanted to die for your own selfish reasons?" Everyone turned to look at the curly haired man, and suddenly, he didn't like the attention at all. He swallowed and grinned widely, showing his teeth.

"Nothing of the sorts was true, my deah deah Beverly. IT doesn't know what IT's talking about, remembah?" She looked at him, seeing right through the facade. She crossed her arms and raised an eyebrow. "Would I ever lie to you-" She pursed her lips, breathing through her nose.

"Well, you lied to me about when your parents kicked you out when you were eighteen." She said. "You lied about the abuse. You lied about the last meal you ate when we were all together still, *all* the

fucking time. You lied about the time you lost your glasses and said you got fucking contacts and couldn't see for two days because your parents wouldn't get you new glasses. You lied to me when you were basically living at the barrens and told me you stayed with someone. I saw through it *all* Richie. And I see through your lie now. Did you try to kill yourself?" Richie stared at her, eyes wide. He didn't know what to think, say or do. He didn't know whether to just get up and leave, to be mad at her, or to just tell the truth. As per usual, his decision was the stupidest one he could make.

"Well fuck you two, Beaverly." He glared at her. "Thanks *a lot* for outing me to every fucking one. I told you those things for a *reason*, and *only* you. They didn't need to know that shit. It's not their problem. And you know what? So what if I'm a liar? So what if I'm a fucking disappointment? You guys would probably have been happy if I had actually killed myself, which, by the way, I didn't try to do. Trust me, I thought about it." He stood up angrily. "I sat on that fucking cliff so many times, tempted to just jump off and see if the angle would kill me. Sometimes I wished the fucking clown would have just killed me when IT had the chance to."

"You really are selfish, you know that?" She was standing now. "You only think about yourself. Did you ever think how much you'd hurt us if you did that? Have you ever thought about how your family would have reacted? What if Mike and your parents and sisters never got to meet you?"

"Bev-" Eddie started but Richie cut him off

"What family?" He yelled. "What family did I *have*? None, that's what. They wouldn't have batted a fucking eye if I died, if that missing persons poster was real. The rest of you? You didn't even know I was in a fucking band until a couple weeks ago, even though I'd told you multiple times that I had a show or fucking rehearsal. And my real family? They'd have been better off without me."

"Richie! That's not true!" Nancy exclaimed.

"How about everyone just shut the fuck up?" Will stood, crossing his arms and glaring at the two.

"How about I just leave everyone alone and go back to Derry?" Richie suggested.

"Why not go to the quarry here and think about *that*?" Bev said. Everyone gasped comically. Richie's mouth dropped open as he stared at her. Her own eyes widened as she realized what she said. "Rich-"

"We all just need to calm down-" Hopper said, standing up and holding his hands up. Richie's laughter caused him to quiet abruptly and everyone stared at him.

"Wow, you are a real bitch, Bevvie." He cackled. "I might just do that, actually." He said, walking towards the door. "See? No one's going to try and stop me from leaving!" He threw the front door open and yelled out into the dark, "Hey Pennywise! You want me? Come and get me!"

"Richie! I didn't mean it, I'm sorry!" Bev yelled as he walked down the street. He turned around and started walking backwards. He cupped his hands around his mouth and yelled,

"Oh but ya did! And ya damn right yir sorry! A sorry best friend, that is!"

El darted off Mike's lap and out the door, holding her hand out and forcing Richie to stop.

"Hey! Let me go, dammit!" He didn't even question what was happening. "Let me go get drunk and drown my sorrows in alcohol and be selfish like my adoptive parents!" He could hardly move in her grasp. She walked towards him, a fire in her eyes that sort of scared the shit out of him. He may have peed a little but that could have been the fact that she was nearly squeezing the life out of him.

"No." She stated. "You're angry, you're hurt. I understand. You need to calm down."

"Yeah man, what she said is fucked up but what you said isn't true. We wouldn't be better off with out you." Mike told him, falling in step with her. Nancy and Eddie jogged to catch up with them as everyone

joined them outside but stayed in the yard.

"I hate to bring her up, but what about Nora?" Nancy said. "She wouldn't know who you are, and you wouldn't know how much she loves you, Richie."

"What about me, Chee?" Eddie asked softly. "If it weren't for you, I wouldn't have gotten away from my mom."

"Stop trying to guilt me into not being mad." Richie scoffed.

"We're not trying to guilt you." Nancy said. "You have a right to be mad. We're only trying to tell you we love you and don't want anything to happen to you."

"Now stop being a dramatic asshole and calm the hell down." Eddie crossed his arms over his chest.

"I'm not going back there. Not tonight." Richie shook his head, the only thing he could actually move.

"Okay, you don't have to. You can come and stay at our place tonight." Mike offered, glancing at El, who nodded in agreement.

"And Eddie, if you want to come too, you can. We don't want to separate you two."

"Fine." Richie stared at El expectantly. "You can let me go now." She seemed to have forgotten about the hold she had on him and dropped her hand.

"Sorry." She muttered.

"Is all okay, Sweets." He said, shaking his arms out. "But damn you got a grip with that force shit." She snorted.

"Sorry. Let's go though, I don't like being out in the street at night." She huddled in closer to Mike, who wrapped an arm around her. Richie did the same with Eddie and Nancy and the five walked back to the house. Richie blatantly ignored Bev and leaned against Mike's car, lighting up a cigarette with Nancy under one arm and Eddie going back inside to get some stuff for them to take, as Richie was

adamant on not going back in.

"Richie, please." Bev was nearly crying.

"Did you hear that?" He asked Nancy, who looked at him and then at Bev and shrugged.

"Oh come on, Richie." Stan said, crossing his arms. "Stop being such a drama queen."

"Huh, I see you're on her side then, Stanley." He nodded to him once and ignored him as well, taking a puff of his cigarette. Richie saw Nora squirming in Joyce's arms, pointing at him. He put the cigarette out quickly and walked forward, taking her out of Joyce's arms. She hugged his neck happily, nuzzling her face into his neck.

"You tink, Chee Chee." She said. He snorted.

"Sorry, Nori." He kissed her cheek and leaned next to Nancy again. While they were waiting on Eddie, Mike and El, who had gone in to grab their own things, everyone said their goodbyes and left, promising to call if anything else happens. Mike and El came out, followed closely by Eddie, who carried a bag.

"Sorry for making you get our stuff, Eds, I just don't want to deal with bullshit in there anymore." He apologized, but Eddie shushed him with a quick kiss.

"S'fine." He mumbled against his lips and threw the bag in the back.

"Are you mad at me too, Eddie?" Bev asked.

"For what you said, yeah. But I'm not taking sides. I just don't want to sleep without Richie." Richie stuck his tongue out at him, then wiggled his eyebrows.

"Please don't do anything inappropriate anywhere in our house." Mike called as he got in the car after saying goodbye to Nancy and Jonathan. Richie snorted. He kissed Nora's cheek again and gave her to Nancy. She gave him and Eddie both a side hug.

"If *anything* happens, Nance, big or small, call someone, okay?" Eddie

told her.

"I will, I promise."

31. Eddie the Therapist

"What in the actual *fuck* Bev?" Stan yelled as soon as everyone was gone. She covered her mouth with her hands.

"I-I didn't mean it, I swear."

"You basically told him to go kill himself! That's fucked up!"

"I know it's fucked up, Stan! It's not like any of you tried to stop me!"

"No, because we were fucking surprised." Ben said, glaring at her. "We shouldn't have to try and stop you. You knew what you were saying. *Don't* blame us for that bullshit." He stormed upstairs and slammed his bedroom door shut. Stan huffed and followed, going into his own room. Mike H just sighed, shrugged, and went to his own room.

"Why did I say that, Bill? I didn't mean it, why did I say it?" She yelled at her self, burying her face in her hands as she sat on the couch. He sighed and sat next to her, rubbing her back as she cried. He was definitely pissed at her, without a doubt, but he didn't want to leave her alone. "It's like...It's like something *in* me *made* me say it. I don't want him to die. He's my *best* friend." He pulled her into a hug and let her cry.

"Like w-when we w-were kids, IT is tr-trying to split us a-apart, already."

"What do I do, Bill? He'll never speak to me again."

"Y-yes he will, Bev. J-Just give h-him some t-time to cool off." He would have kept going but the phone rang again. Bev sniffed and looked at him.

"Can you answer?" She asked. He nodded and stood, going over to the phone.

"Hello?"

"Billy! How's everything going there?" Sharon asked.

"Oh, um... Everything's fine. Um, w-why are you calling so late?"

"Is Richie there?"

"Um, no, he's at his b-brothers h-house."

"Oh, I really need to speak with him-Wait, brother?"

"It's a l-long st-story, mom. I can give you their number? He'll p-probably be staying there for a c-couple of d-days."

"Okay, yes, please." He gave her the number.

"I w-wouldn't call right n-now. He w-wasn't feeling well so he-he's probably asleep. He'll p-pr-probably be awake a-around nine or s-so. Why -d-do you n-need to talk to h-him?"

He nearly dropped the phone when she told him.

"Is anyone hungry?" Mike asked as the four walked into the house. "I can make us something to eat?" He offered.

"No-" Richie started but Eddie interrupted him.

"You should eat something, Chee. You threw up earlier, remember?"

"I don't want to. It was disgusting." He muttered childishly.

"Do you want anything, Eddie?" Mike asked. "I can make sandwiches or something." They agreed and he went in the kitchen.

"Sit down." Eddie ordered and nudged him until he was sitting on the couch.

"Just make yourselves at home." El told them. "I'm gonna go change." They nodded. Eddie sat next to him and turned so he was sitting facing him, sitting Indian style.

"Chee." He said softly. "I know you're trying to be strong, but you don't have to be. Not here. I know you're scared, mad, upset, but

please don't just bottle up everything."

"Eddie, I am *fine*." He said, looking at him. "I don't need to be upset because I'm *not*. I don't need to be mad because I'm *not*. I *am* disappointed, though. Disappointed in Bev, Stan, everyone else for just letting her say that shit to me. Evidently they don't want me around, because they didn't even try and get me to stay, so, why should I be upset or mad?" He shrugged, chuckling. "I'm scared outta my wits though, yeah. I don't fucking know what to do, Eddie, because my brother and sisters have already encountered that mother fucking clown and so has his friends, and I can't let any of them die. I won't let them die."

"I understand, Richie. Everyone was just...shocked, they do want you around. We *all* want you around. If we didn't, we'd have stopped talking to you years ago."

"You and Bev were the only ones who actually understood me." He said, looking away from him. "Because you both had shitty parents who abused you, in different ways, yeah, but still abused you. Hell, my parents aren't even my real parents. Like, who the fuck adopts a child only to fucking beat them for eighteen goddamn years? And Bev, I called her almost everyday and she laughed at all my jokes, she never told me to shut up. You did but you weren't trying to be an ass about it like the rest of them. And now she tells me to go kill myself?" He crossed his arms and shook his head. "She can go fuck herself. What did I *do* for her to hate me? Yeah, I lied about some things but she's not a saint. Not by far. Her and Bill both fucking lied about being together to the rest of you guys for the last six and a half years. I lied to keep you from worrying, not to be a dick.'

"She doesn't hate you, Richie. IT is trying to split us up."

"I bet she used that as an excuse too." He huffed. Eddie sighed and stood up, kissing Richie's cheek.

"I'm gonna go help Mike in the kitchen." Richie just nodded. Eddie went in the kitchen, where Mike was washing his hands, and said,

"I feel bad for El if you're as stubborn as Richie." Mike jumped nearly a foot in the air and turned around.

"Fuck, Eddie, you scared me." Eddie snickered.

"You both scare easily too, so." He shrugged and walked next to him while he dried off his hands.

"I heard him in there." Mike said quietly, pulling stuff out of the fridge. "Did they really just abuse him?"

"I think...I think they loved him, growing up. The abuse didn't start until he was six. Went cheated on Maggie around that time and she started drinking, started pushing him around, yelling at him if he got a little too rowdy. Went was hardly ever home as he grew up, but when he was, he was drunk all the same and he started hitting him, and then she did too. There was hardly ever food in the house. He only weighed ninety pounds when we fought IT the first time." Mike put his hands on the counter and leaned forward, letting out a shaky breath.

"I wish they'd gotten me instead." He muttered.

"Mike-"

"Either that, or I wish my dad hadn't wanted to put us up for adoption. I wish he hadn't. Do you have any idea how badly I wanted to punch him in the fucking face when he told us that? Richie doesn't deserve what happened to him, and I can tell he thinks that. I can hear it in his *voice.*"

"Look, I know you feel bad about what happened to him, but everything happens for a reason, right? The seven of us? We were supposed to be together. Richie would've found his way to Derry this time. And you, if you were in Derry, I have no doubt you'd have found your way to Hawkins and to El. I hate what happened to him too, and I let him stay over at my house too many times to count. I gave him half of my lunch everyday since sixth grade." Mike sighed again.

"You're right, but it doesn't change the fact that it sucks balls."

"Oh God, you say *that* too?"

32. One of the Seven Leaves Town

The next morning, Richie was the first to wake up, which came as a surprise to him, and Eddie when he woke up. He sighed and kissed Eddie on the forehead and managed to get out of the smaller mans grip, and pulled on his shirt, before heading down stairs. He looked at the clock and noticed it was a few minutes after nine. Deciding to make coffee for everyone, he dug through the cabinets, figuring the owners of the house wouldn't mind considering he's making *them* coffee too. He sat on the counter as he waited for the pot to fill up.

"I'm surprised she hasn't called yet." He muttered to himself as he poured the coffee and then put a shit ton of sugar in it. He drank about half of it, standing in the kitchen looking out the window, and started to go in the living room when the phone rang. He made a face and picked it up on the third ring, putting the cup on the counter.

"Wheeler residence, Mike's twin brother speaking."

"Richie?" The voice of Sharon Denbrough asked.

"Mrs. Denbrough?" He asked, confused.

"Thank goodness, Richie. I called Beverly's house last night but Bill told me you were staying with your brother? Which I'm still confused about, but he told me you weren't feeling well. Are you okay now?"

"Uh, yeah, I'm fine. Why'd you call her house?" He asked.

"Something happened, Richie..." She said softly. "Are you sitting down?"

"Yeah." He lied.

"Okay, um, it involves your parents, Sweetie. They uh, yesterday, there was an accident involving a drunk driver. It wasn't them, another man." He swallowed and didn't say anything for a couple seconds.

"Are they okay?"

"Their car was completely totaled. They flipped multiple times until they landed upside down in a ditch." She said, as if that told him what he wanted to know.

"Mrs. Denbrough."

"They...They're dead, Richie. They died on impact."

He dropped the phone.

By the time Eddie, Mike and El woke up, Richie was long gone, and none of them knew it. He'd already crossed the county line and the Losers *all* had a bad feeling, plus Mike. When Eddie woke up, he had a weird, gnawing feeling in the pit of is stomach, and he knew it had to do with Richie not being in bed. He immediately got up and left the room in search of him. Mike and El were already making their way downstairs when he asked,

"Have either of you seen Richie?" They looked at him and shook their heads.

"No, not since last night." El said. Mike swallowed visibly.

"I have this weird feeling, though." He said quietly, as they continued down. Eddie smelled coffee, so he figured he was in the kitchen, so he called,

"Richie!" No answer. The three walked into the kitchen, and the first thing Eddie saw was the coffee pot and sugar, the second was the half empty coffee cup, and the third thing was the note next to it. They looked at each other, and he rushed to pick it up.

I'll be back in a few days. My adoptive parents are dead and I have to deal with everything like a normal adult. I love you guys and I'll be back as soon as possible.

Love, Richie

"Oh God." Eddie covered his mouth with his hand and handed the note over to Mike. El read the note over his shoulder and gasped quietly. Mike closed his eyes and sighed, and was about to speak but

the phone rang.

"These goddamn phones ring at the worst fucking times." Eddie grumbled as Mike snatched the phone up.

"Hello?"

"Mike! Can I talk to Eddie or Richie?" Ben asked. Mike swallowed and looked at Eddie.

"It's Ben, he wants to talk to you." He gave him the phone.

"What's wrong, Ben?" He asked.

"Do you have this weird feeling? Like something's gonna happen soon? All of us do." Eddie sighed, running a hand over his face.

"Richie's gone." He said simply. "That's why. He's left Hawkins while we're supposed to be together."

"He left? What, why? What else happened last night?" Ben exclaimed.

"He left us a note and said his parents are dead. He's gone back to Derry."

"Did he say he was coming back?"

"He said a couple days. He left a note."

"What do you think he's gonna do?"

"He'll probably have the funeral as soon as possible and then come back. At least, I hope."

"What do we do until he gets back?" Ben asked.

"Well, stay together as much as possible, never be alone, and we wait."

Richie wasn't sure how long he stood on the front porch of his old home. It could have been minutes, hours, he didn't know. He did know, that within the time he stood there, mosquitoes had come out.

The door was unlocked, he knew that much, but he hadn't stepped foot in, yet.

He slept on the plane ride, having taken some NyQuil before he boarded, and was only woken by a flight attendant. He'd gotten a taxi back to Derry and the further he got from Hawkins and his friends and family, the worst he felt, and he knew it wasn't just because of their deaths.

He couldn't really remember the last time either of his parents talked to him, willingly. Probably before IT showed up the first time, maybe. Maybe it was when Went finally got him braces (and put them on himself). Actually, the last time either talked to him without cursing was during the summer after he turned fourteen, and after that, they just got worse. He loved them, yes, but he definitely didn't like them, not one bit. He didn't necessarily hate them, he just hated the way they treated him and what they were doing to themselves.

He took a breath and took a step forward, and heard the boards underneath him creak with each step. Pushing open the door, he expected it to be littered with empty bottles. He figures they loved him, when he was young, before they started drinking. Maggie used to help him with his homework if he needed it, and Went was the main reason he started doing voices, because he did them.

The living room was spotless, like it had been recently cleaned. He wondered if Bill's parents maybe came over and cleaned up for him, maybe that's why. The furniture was the same, the entire living room was set up the same way it was when he left. The only difference is that there are pictures of him *everywhere*. It was almost like a shrine- Okay there weren't *that* many pictures, but there were a lot. Not just of him. He assumed that the Denbrough's gave them some graduation pictures, because there were three of them up on one wall. One of just him in his cap and gown, grinning at the camera, one of him walking across the stage, and the third of the entire group, sans Beverly.

He went into the kitchen next, as he couldn't bring himself to walk up the stairs. There were a few dishes in the sink, but other than that, it was just as spotless as the living room. He looked in the fridge and saw that it was filled with food and drinks, which was a shocker to

him. For as long as he could remember, there had hardly ever been any food in the fridge at all, and even when there was, it was never this much. He shut it and let out a sigh, and walked over to the sink. He washed the dishes and hummed as he did so, in an attempt to distract himself.

It didn't work.

33. Saddest Chapter I've Ever Written

Notes for the Chapter:

> Only a couple more chapters left guys! Maybe five or so? Depending on how long I make them! I changed the number of chapters on here and I'll probably change them again depending on how many chapters I THINK there'll be. I have a couple written already but can't post them yet cus I gotta write some more stuff for in between! I'm getting my computer back on Thursday so I plan to have a chapter up for Phenomenal Mutiny! No promises though. Anyways, anyone got any theories as to who else dies (or what happens in the next couple chapters)?

Richie had no clue how to describe what he was feeling. His bones ached, his head hurt, his chest was tight and he felt like there were a bunch of butterflies holding knives were attacking his stomach. He made a face at his own thoughts and rolled his eyes, but that made his head hurt worse.

Well, that's entirely possible if there are other dimensions and people that can move shit with their mind. Oh, and demon clowns. Fucking anything's possible at this point.

He was seated on the Denbrough's front porch as he was unable to look through the rest of the house, only going into the living room and kitchen. It was almost like some invisible mental barrier was stopping him. He just couldn't make himself go any further.

He didn't know how long he was sitting on their front porch, he just knew they weren't home, probably at the funeral home or somewhere making decisions *for* him, which he'd asked them to do, though it was his responsibility. He sighed and ran a hand through his hair, he had plenty of things to deal with, surely that wouldn't hurt.

"Richie?" Sharon asked. His head snapped up and he saw her and Zack standing in front of him. He must have looked as bad as he felt because she sat next to him and pulled him into her arms, hugging

him tightly. He didn't register much after that, he just knew that Zack had given him a short hug and then rushed inside. He'd somehow ended up on the couch next to Sharon, a cup of hot tea, *tea* of all things, in his hands. It was good though. "Richie, Sweetie." Sharon squeezed his shoulder and he looked at her.

"Yeah?" He asked softly.

"How long were you outside?" She asked. He blinked and pushed his glasses up his nose.

"I, uh, I'm not sure. Maybe an hour or two. I...went home." He cringed a little at the word *home* but continued. "I couldn't...couldn't go anywhere except for the kitchen and living room." He remembered how clean it was then. "Did you clean?" He asked. Her eyebrows furrowed and she looked at Zack, who shrugged a little.

"We haven't been inside in years, son." He told him. Richie made a face.

"It was clean...except for dishes. There was food too. There never used to be any food."

"They went to rehab, Richie." Sharon told him gently. "They got better, were both almost 6 months sober." His breath hitched.

"I didn't know..." He whispered.

"I know, Sweetie. I would see your mom at the grocery store and she'd ask me about you. Talk about you." She rubbed his back. "They didn't think you'd want anything to do with them."

"I didn't." He said simply. "I...I know I'm a terrible person for saying it, but...I didn't want anything to do with them. I wouldn't if they were...if they were alive. Did you know they abused me? And kicked me out?" He asked.

"I didn't know for sure." She looked down guiltily. "We had our assumptions but we didn't know for sure."

"They're not even my parents. I'm adopted." He shook his head a little. "I have a twin brother and two sisters, older and younger."

"Really?" Zack asked, surprised. He nodded. "What are their names?"

"Nancy's the oldest, Mike, and Holly. I was born before Mike, I'm six minutes older." He smiled a little at that. "I call him my little brother, even though we're the same age... Our dad is the reason I was put up for adoption, I don't blame him though." He shrugged.

"What do you mean by that?" She asked.

"They were tight on money." He lied. "I'd have done the same thing, try and give the kid a better life." He shrugged. She looked at Zack, a knowing look between them. It was rare for them to ever see a Richie who didn't joke, and this was one of those times, and it was *not* going to go well, to say the least.

"What exactly is our plan, here, Bill?" Stan asked, crossing his arms and leaning against the counter in the kitchen, looking down at the leader of their little group, who was sitting at the table with the other three.

"All w-we can do is wait f-for Richie to g-get back." He said simply.

"That could be days, even weeks, Bill." Ben said. "We need to stop IT before IT gets anyone else."

"What else *can* we do?" Bev asked.

"I don't know Bev, what *should* we do? You seem to know fuck all about everything." Stan snapped. She sighed and ignored him. "Gonna ignore me like Richie ignored you? Real mature."

"You know what? Fuck you, Stan. Stop acting like you're fucking perfect because you're not." She snapped back. "*You're* the one who acts like you know everything, *not me.*"

"You seemed to know Richie pretty damn well. It's a pity, though, because apparently you didn't know he wanted to kill himself."

"None of us knew!" Mike exclaimed. Everyone looked at him. "None of us knew. None of us caught on to what was happening at home. Do you remember how damn skinny he was when we fought IT the

first time? He was fucking ninety pounds."

"He hid it pretty damn well." Stan said.

"And you," Mike turned to him. "You were supposed to be his best friend and you didn't realize it. He went to your fucking bar mitzvah. He was the only one who went." Stan started to say something but Mike interrupted him. "Don't say a damn thing about the rest of us not going, it's too late to change the past and we're not getting into *that*. What I'm saying is none of us is to blame. IT has an effect on all the adults *and* us. No, Bev should *not* have said what she said, and yes I'm pissed at her for it, but ganging up on her and fighting with each other isn't gonna solve this damn problem. I say we wait and talk when *Eddie* is here, and maybe even Mike, because he's Richie's brother."

"I think we should all go to that thing Richie mentioned." Ben said. "Something about a Steve having a get together with Mike and his friends? We could try and come up with a game plan that *involves Richie* even though he isn't here right now."

"You're right." Bill nodded in agreement.

"I'll go call Dustin and tell him to let the others know." Bev said stiffly, standing up and going over to the phone.

"I have to tell Holly her best friend is dead." Mike said out of nowhere. He, El and Eddie were sitting in the living room, the TV on but they weren't really watching. El looked at him. "How do I tell her? Hop is telling the parents... Or told them." El and Eddie looked at each other. He leaned forward and rubbed his face, groaning into his hands. He paused for a second, rubbed his eyes and stood up. "I'm going over there. If you two wanna come, you can."

Thirty minutes later, a sobbing Holly was in his arms. He held her as if she was a baby, rocking her back and forth as she cried into his chest. Karen was sitting on the couch next to them, attempting to calm her down too, but it wouldn't work. El and Eddie sat across from them, tears falling down El's face as Eddie tried to hold back his own.

"Don't let IT get me too, Mike." She cried. His eyes widened and he tensed. "I don't wanna die." He squeezed her tighter, burying his face in her hair.

"I won't let IT get you, Holly. I promise."

If only he knew he wouldn't be able to keep that promise.

Notes for the Chapter:

(No Holly does not die, I'll give you that.)

34. The Worst Day of Mike's Life

Summary for the Chapter:

> This... Is a long-ish chapter. You are Welcome.
> I love you guys but you will most likely hate me. :D

Notes for the Chapter:

> So basically last chapter was supposed to be titled 'Saddest Chapter I've Ever Written' and for some reason didn't save before I posted but it's fixed now so yeah! :)

Wednesday, June 20, 1992

Richie was sure that he's never gone this long without cracking a joke or smiling. He didn't know why he felt so... empty. These people never treated him right, he didn't know why he was so upset over it. He'd asked Sharon about it but she said that it was normal, and that her father was definitely not the best but it still hurt her when he died. It's the fact that they raised him, albeit not doing a very good job at it.

He hadn't gone back in the house since he came back. He's talked to the bank about when he'd do next, with the house and his parents bank account, *and* Went's dental practice, and all he gathered from it all was that he'd end up with *a lot* of money in the coming months. He probably slept eight hours in the three days he's been in Derry, at his apartment, and has only eaten thanks to Sharon and the meals she brought him.

An hour before the funeral, there was a knock on the door. He had an old suit on, the jacket on the couch, one shoe on, and his tie untied around his neck when he opened.

"What are you guys doing here?"

"You look like shit." Malcolm stated, pushing past him and walking

in.

"Yeah, when your abusive adopted parents died it kinda happens." Ayla pulled him in for a hug and he hugged her back.

"Abusive?" Jack asked, confused, as he sat on the couch with Malcolm.

"Adopted?" Ayla raised an eyebrow and pulled away. He sighed and nodded.

"Sit and I'll explain." She did so and he sat in an arm chair and pulled on his other shoe, tying it as he began to explain how abusive the Toziers had been. Then he explained the adoption deal. "Basically, I have a twin brother, an older sister, and a little sister." He said, looking at them. "Bev, you've heard the rest of us talk about her, lives in Hawkins, Indiana, where we were born and where I was put up for adoption. His name is Mike, Nancy is the oldest, and Holly is the youngest. Mike and I were an accident, especially the fact that our mom was having twins, so our dad wanted tog ive one up for adoption and that was me. They still live in Hawkins, and all this came up when me and the others arrived. This actually brings me back to what I was gonna talk to you guys about when I came back at the end of the summer." He let the three process everything for a moment and continued,

"I plan to move to Hawkins." He said. "At the end of the summer, when we all come back and everyone goes back to college for their last year, I want to pack up and move to where my family is. I'll have a lot of money by then and I'll be able to. I love you guys and I love the band, and I don't want to leave you guys but if I have to-"

"We'll come with you." Jack said. The other two looked at him and then nodded in agreement. Richie stared at them for a moment.

"What?" He squeaked.

"Yeah, Derry is a shit show, man. Hawkins might not be any bigger or better but it sure *sounds* better than Derry. This place is insane."

Psh, if only you guys knew.

"I don't know what to say." Richie said, finally. "Um, thats awesome. You'll get to meet them." He gave them a smile and they smiled back. They talked more about it until they had to leave for the funeral.

There were more people than Richie expected that showed up. The first hour was the wake and the second was the funeral, and during the wake a good bit of people came up to him and hugged him, telling him that if he needed anything to let them know. He didn't go *anywhere* near the caskets. He knew he'd probably regret it one day but he couldn't look at Denbroughs had taken care of the entire funeral, except for it's expenses, which Richie took care of. The flower arrangements were just red roses, and Richie held one in each hand, watching as the two caskets were lowered into the ground. The priest had said a prayer, there was some sad song played, another prayer, and now he was standing in the space between them, staring ahead.

He let out a slow breath, held his hands out over them, and let the roses fall.

Another kid's gone missing, and yes, everyone knew what got them, but Mike and Hopper still had to look for the child instead of just putting it to the side and ignoring the situation, so, they're out searching Mirkwood with another team out in the woods. Apparently, Troy had started causing some shit at the mall and got arrested and ended up getting community service, and this is what Hopper decided he would do. Trudge through muddy water and ditches, looking for a child they knew they wouldn't find. And Mike knew, deep down, that he would regret agreeing with Hopper and letting Troy tag along with him. Everything was going fine, Hopper was a couple yards away from them, and the two were walking a few feet apart from each other. It started going downhill when Troy asked,

"Do you remember when I made you jump off that cliff?" Mike glanced at him, an eyebrow raised.

"Uh, yeah?"

"Oh, okay." He didn't say anything for a few seconds. "What about that time I pushed your little girlfriend and you beat me up?" Mike

froze when he heard the click of a gun. He took a deep breath and turned around slowly, a hand on his own gun. "Put your hands up, *now*." Troy growled.

"Look, Troy, that was four years ago."

"It was, wasn't it? That doesn't change anything, Mike." The way he said it, his voice didn't sound… human. Mike's heart skipped a beat when he saw the white gloved hands slowly move over Troy's shoulders.

"Troy, this isn't you man. Don't let *IT* take over you." He saw a red balloon float away, but not in the air. Mike's stare followed the balloon and it popped, and his father was there, walking towards them.

"Mike!" Ted yelled, suddenly terrified for his sons life.

"Dad, leave. Don't come any closer." Mike was basically begging him not to.

"Yeah, *dad*, don't come any closer." It wasn't Troy's voice. It was the clowns. In a split second, Mike felt his heart skip a beat for the second time in five minutes. Troy pointed the gun towards Ted and pulled the trigger.

"NO!" Mike screamed. He ran towards his dad, not even bothering to look back at Troy, as *IT* left him and he fell in a heap on the ground. Mike knelt next to his dad, a pool of blood already formed underneath him. Mike put his hands on his stomach to try and stop the bleeding.

"I need an ambulance out here now!" Mike heard Hopper yell.

"No, no, dad, stay with me." Mike looked at his dad.

"Mike…" Ted croaked. "I-I'm sorry."

"Don't talk, dad, you're gonna be fine." Mike didn't notice the tears falling down his face. Ted put a bloody hand on Mike's arm.

"Y-you're not a disappointment." He whispered. "I didn't mean it."

"I-I know dad."

"Tell...tell your mom and… and sisters I'm sorry. I'm sorry for being a terrible husband and fa-father. T-Tell Richard I'm sorry for l-letting h-him go."

"No, no dad, you're not terrible. You're going to be fine."

"I'm proud of you M-Mike. Always r-remember that… I l-l-love you."

"I love you too dad, you-Dad?" Ted's eyes closed and his chest stopped moving. "No." Mike whispered. "No! No, dad, please!" He grabbed his wrist and checked for a pulse. Nothing. He moved his hands to his chest and began doing CPR. Hopper finally ran over to them, after trying, and failing, to resuscitate Troy.

"Oh God." Mike ignored him. He ignored everything, he just continued pumping his chest, even after the paramedics arrived. Hopper had to grab Mike and pull him away from his dad while the paramedics did their job. They tried to revive him for an *hour* and Mike couldn't handle it when someone said the time of death.

"NO!" He screamed, fresh tears pouring down his face. "NO! NO! Let me go! Let me go!" He yelled at Hopper, who just held onto him tighter. Mike started hitting him as hard as he could, but Hopper stood his ground and held onto him as tight as he could until he started sobbing into his shoulder.

"You're okay kid, you're okay. It's gonna be alright." And Hopper knew it wouldn't. He had to tell Karen, Nancy, Richie and Holly that their husband and father was dead.

"What the hell is going on, dad?" El asked, rushing into the police station. She gasped when she saw Mike sitting in a chair, a blanket wrapped around him, covered in blood. She rushed over to him and knelt in front of him. She put her hands on his cheeks and made him look at her. His eyes were red and puffy.

"El, come here for a minute." Hopper told her softly. She looked at Mike, who looked back down at the floor.

"I'll be back." She told him. He didn't respond as she stood up and followed Hopper into his office. "What the hell? Is that *his* blood?" Hopper shook his head.

"It's Ted's." He replied, quietly. Her eyes widened.

"W-what?"

"We were on Mirkwood, just walking around, looking in ditches and through the fields. I was a couple yards ahead of Mike, and Troy was with him. I'm not sure what happened exactly, all I know is I heard a gunshot, Mike screamed and Ted was on the ground, Troy was dead, and Mike was with his dad." He ran a hand over his face, sighing deeply, "I didn't even know Ted was there until I saw him, I thought it was Mike. He-he died in Mike's arms. Mike did CPR but it wasn't working, then the paramedics tried to revive him but…" He trailed off. El covered her mouth with her hand.

"Why did he do that?" She whispered, tearing up.

"I don't know but if it wasn't for Ted showing up when he did, I think Troy would've shot Mike instead."

"I-I need to-" She looked towards the door.

"Go ahead." He interrupted, and she all but ran back out to where Mike was. She knelt in front of him again and pulled him into a hug, not caring if her shirt got covered in blood too.

"I'm so sorry, baby. I'm so sorry." He didn't shed another tear. He just hugged her tight.

Hopper called Karen, who immediately came to the station with Holly and Nancy. He explained to them what happened, and all three of them basically smothered Mike, crying hysterically and hugging him tightly. Hopper put an arm around El and she cried into his shoulder.

No, Ted Wheeler wasn't the greatest husband or father, but that didn't make it hurt any less.

"I'm sorry." Mike whispered, hugging them back.

"Oh my God, Mike, it's not your fault." Nancy told him through her tears.

"I..." He couldn't continue, he just continued to bite back the tears. He thought about Richie and how he had to tell him when he came back.

If he came back.

35. Mike is DONE With Penny's Shit

Notes for the Chapter:

> Just to let y'all know, there's probably three legit chapters left and then maybe a LONG ass epilogue that'll probably take forever to write :)

"Everyone needs to shut the fuck up right now and let me fucking explain." Mike snapped. When he and El got home many hours later, he requested that she call everyone and have them come over while he showered, the Party, the Losers, Nancy, Jonathan, Steve, Hopper and Joyce. Everyone stopped talking, surprised at his tone of voice, and turned to him.

"What the hell happened, dude?" Lucas asked. None of them knew what happened. At least, not yet.

"There's been a change of plans." He replied. "We're not waiting for Richie to get back. We're going to kill that mother fucking clown *tomorrow*."

"But *why*? What else happened?" Mike H asked. Mike swallowed and shook his head.

"My dad... is dead because of that... because of that *fucking* clown." He watched as everyone's expressions changed from shock, to sympathy, to horror, and back to sympathy. "And I'm not gonna let anyone else I love get taken or hurt by that mother fucker as long as I can help it. If Richie isn't back by nightfall tomorrow, well, he won't have to face this fucking demon and I'll be glad. He's been through *enough*." Mike started babbling and ranting about how Richie didn't deserve any of what had happened to him and about how badly he wanted to kill the clown until Ben stood up and said,

"Do you need to scream?" Mike paused and looked at him, confused.

"What?" Everyone else looked just as confused.

"Do you need to scream? When I'm really upset or frustrated I'll just

scream into a pillow."

"I'd prefer punching something but... I guess screaming wouldn't hurt." Mike shrugged and snatched a pillow off the couch, buried his face into it and just *screamed.* He screamed at the top of his lungs, louder than anyone thought he could.

As he screamed, the lights began flickering.

"Holy shit, is he doing that?" Dustin asked, looking around. There was a giggle coming from the kitchen and the lights flickered faster. Mike's head snapped up at the giggle and looked around frantically, eyes narrowing.

"Do you have your bat, Steve?" Mike muttered to him. Steve nodded and tossed it to him. He'd apparently brought it in with him, just having a bad feeling.

"Mike, wait a second." Lucas tried to stop him but Mike just huffed and ignored him, slowly creeping into the kitchen.

"Why? I'm not scared of this fucker." He replied.

"Mike..." El whispered. He looked over at her and saw her eyes wide.

"That wasn't me." She said quickly.

"Mike..." She whispered again, louder this time, coming from the kitchen. Mike glanced back at the others to make sure they heard it too, and took a couple more steps into the kitchen. What he saw was definitely not what he expected. He lowered the bat just a tiny bit, eyes widening a little.

El was twelve again, head shaved, wearing that pink dress and too big jacket. The main difference? She was grey, her eyes were glazed over, blank. There was some gooey substance flowing from her mouth, that had a reddish tint to it, dripping down her chin and onto her shoes. Her skin looked like it was slowly rotting before him and he stepped back. He looked at the real El and back at the other.

"What the fuck are you showing me this for?" Mike snarled. "I know it's not real you dumb fuck."

"Mike..."

"Mike." He mocked. "El, I hope you know I'm doing this because it's not you. I'd never do this."

"I know." He heard her say. Not-El giggled, showing hundreds of tiny, sharp teeth in IT's mouth. The lights were insane, and for a second he felt like he was twelve again. He lifted the bat higher, too a couple of quick steps forward, and whacked Not-El right in the face.

"Get the *fuck* out of my house." He growled, swinging again and hitting IT's shoulder.

Pennywise growled and lunged, throwing out an arm and going for Joyce, who was standing behind him. Mike jumped to the side, taking the claw in the shoulder. Pennywise hissed and retracted the claws, backing away into the shadow of where he'd been standing.

"You dick." Mike looked totally done, ignoring the searing pain in his left shoulder. "I'm goddamn tired of you." Pennywise giggled again and disappeared.

"What." Bev said, dumbfounded.

"What." Eddie made a face. "What the fuck was that."

"Um, Mike?" Dustin said. Mike looked at him, his eyes just as wide as everyone else's.

"What?"

"You have, uh, a little something there." He gestured to Mike's shoulder and everyone's eyes shifted to the fairly large cuts across his shoulder. He sighed, feeling it throb.

"I've seen enough fucking blood to last a life time."

"How in the actual ever loving hell are you acting like that was a normal thing that just happened?" Steve asked, looking like he was about to pass out himself.

"I honestly just don't fucking care right now, Steve, that's why. I'm

sure I'll freak the hell out later but I'm pissed and upset and I just wanna kill that thing for killing my dad and ruining our lives, more so you guys." He gestured to the Losers. "I've *had* it with all this paranormal *bullshit*." He looked at the others, who were staring at his shoulder.

"You should uh, probably let someone check that out, kid." Hopper said.

"I'm not going to the hospital." He replied instantly. El rolled his eyes.

"You're so damn stubborn." She grabbed his hand and went to pull him towards the bathroom but he stopped her and held the bat out to Steve.

"Here's your bat." He said. Steve hesitated for a second but took it, grimacing a little at the goo that was on the end of it. He let El lead him to the bathroom and barely registered her asking Eddie and Nancy to help her.

Everyone else just stood in the kitchen silently, wondering what the hell just happened. Eventually, Bill said,

"Is it obvious or is it obvious that he and Richie are related?"

"I mean they are twins, Bill, so-" Steve thumped Dustin on the back of the head.

"Shut up, dipshit."

"Rude." Dustin pouted.

In the bathroom, El was helping Mike take off his shirt while Nancy grabbed a towel and Eddie searched the first aid kit for some alcohol.

"I liked that shirt." Mike said childishly.

"I'll buy you another shirt, Mikey." Nancy told him, ruffling his hair. He just nodded. El tossed it in the sink.

"Do you think you could wet the towel with warm water?" Eddie asked Nancy. She nodded. He put the lid of the toilet seat down and

looked at Mike, pointing at it. "Sit." He did as he was told. "El do you have any tape of any kind anywhere?" He asked.

"Uh yeah, in the kitchen. Joyce knows where it is. I don't want to, uh, to leave him right now."

"It's okay, I'll get it." Eddie told her and rushed into the kitchen. "Joyce, do you know where El keeps the tape?" She nodded and went to one of the drawers, pulling out scotch tape and thankfully, medical tape. She handed he latter to him. "Thanks."

"Wait, Eddie, uh, he doesn't need stitches or anything, does he?" She asked. He shook his head.

"No ma'am, he'll be fine. He's kind of... not registering it much yet. I think the shock of Ted being gone is setting in *a lot* more now than it did earlier." She nodded.

"I figured. Go on, they need you in there, Doctor K." He smiled at that and nodded, rushing back to the bathroom, where Mike just sat there while Nancy wiped at the cuts. Eddie held the tape up triumphantly and El gave him a smile. He took over cleaning the blood from Mike's shoulder and then cleaned the cuts with the alcohol and wrapped it up, using a good bit of tape for the gauze.

"This might rip some hair out when you take it off." Eddie told him. "I put a lot of tape on it to keep it in place.

"What hair?" He mumbled. "I have like three chest hairs." Eddie snorted and rolled his eyes. He patted his other shoulder gently. Nancy leaned down and kissed the top of Mike's head and he gave her hand a squeeze. The four made their way back into the kitchen and Joyce immediately hugged Mike.

"Thank you. You didn't have to jump in front of me like that." She told him softly.

"Yes I did." He replied, hugging her back. He kissed her cheek as she pulled away from him and she smiled at him.

"Should we go over the plan again or wait until tomorrow?" Bev asked after a couple seconds of silence.

"It wouldn't hurt if we went over it a *couple* more times." Hopper said.

"Are we sure that no one's talked to Richie?" Jonathan asked. Everyone nodded.

"Not since Saturday." Eddie said, biting his lip.

Of course, the phone rang right after. Everyone looked at each other, and Mike looked at El.

"Maybe it's him." She said. "You should pick up. If not I'll take it." He nodded and swallowed, reaching over, grimacing as he stretched his bad shoulder a little, and picked the phone up.

"H-hello?"

"Hey, Mike." He sighed in relief, feeling as though he could breath a little better now.

"Richie."

36. Final Fight Part One

Notes for the Chapter:

> Okay so I've decided that the last two chapters are basically gonna be two epilogues. The first one is gonna kinda just be after everything and the last (which will be long as all fuck) is gonna be happy times and shit :)
>
> Here's the schedule & name cus I'm a good ass person;
>
> Final Fight Part Two- May 25
>
> Aftermath- May 28
>
> Epilogue- whenever I finish it but hopefully within a week of Aftermath

"I know you're probably gonna yell at me for not calling or anything but hear me out, I've had a shitty week and I'll be glad to tell you all about it tomorrow when I get back but just wanted to call and let you know I'm alive and will be back tomorrow because I want to kill that fucking clown." Richie hardly took a breath and when he did, he was kind of breathing hard.

"You're coming home tomorrow?" Mike asked, his voice an octave higher.

"Yeah. What's with the voice?"

"I'm just..." Mike coughed into his hand, looking at everyone else who had hopeful looks on their faces. "Some stuff has happened since you left and uh, today especially."

"IT being an annoying fuck?"

"Yeah, went after Joyce but I like, saved her I guess. Got me in the shoulder."

"That dick. At least you'll have sick scars."

"I guess. Um, guys should I tell him the game plan for tomorrow? He's coming back." Mike looked at everyone else who looked incredibly awkward watching him talk on the phone.

"Ooh, is Eddie there?" Richie asked.

"Yeah."

"Can I talk to him?"

"Here, he wants to talk to you." He gestured for Eddie to take the phone. Eddie took it. "What the fuck even." Mike put a hand over his face and leaned on his elbows, ignoring the pain in his shoulder. El stepped closer to him and put an arm around his back, resting her head on his good shoulder.

"What the fuck, Richard?" Eddie asked in greeting.

"Why hello, Eddie Spaghetti! How are you doing on this fine evening?"

"Don't call me that, dickhead. Why did it take so long?"

"Eddie, do you know how long it takes to like drain dead bodies or whatever and get them ready for a funeral? A while. I just buried my adopted parents this morning, give me a break." Eddie sighed, knowing he'd have another funeral to attend in a couple days for his *biological father*.

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry. It's just... I was worried, okay?"

"I know. I'm sorry I just up and left but I didn't know what else to do."

"I know. Okay, I'll go over the plan with you, Mike isn't exactly functioning right now."

"What happened?"

"Just... IT showed him his biggest fear ad it wasn't pretty. Anyways, this is it..." He went on to explain the plan to him, and at the end,

Richie made two very valid points.

"Do we know where this fucker is? Or how to kill it." Eddie paused and looked at everyone else.

"Does anyone actually... *know* where IT is?" Eddie asked. He looked at the Losers. "And how do we kill it? What we did seven years ago certainly didn't work."

"Um..." No one said anything. He sighed.

"That's a hard no, Chee."

"That's what she said." Eddie sighed, pinching the bridge of his nose in an attempt to keep from saying something he shouldn't.

"What time will you be back?"

"My flight, yeah fuck me, leaves at twelve so probably around four depending on if there are delays and shit." They talked for a little while longer until Richie told him he had to go meet with the Denbroughs and they hung up, Richie promising to call before he got on the plane.

"We should all g-go home." Bill said. "A-and rest up f-for tomorrow. It's l-l-late." Everyone agreed and said their goodbyes and said their condolences to Mike and Nancy before leaving. The only people left were Eddie, Nancy and Jonathan. Mike was still leaning against the counter, not having moved an inch since he settled there. Nancy and El had switched places and Nancy was crying silently.

"El?" Mike asked quietly.

"Yeah baby?" She asked.

"Would you be okay if we let Holly stay here tonight? I just... I don't want..."

"I understand, Mike." She told him softly. "Of course. I can go get her if you want."

"Not alone." He said instantly. She shook her head.

"I'll go." Nancy offered. "I have to get Nora anyways." El nodded and looked at Mike, who looked a little relieved. He nodded and stood up all the way.

"Eddie do you want to stay the night again? We can take you to Bev's if you want."

"I think I'll stay here, if that's okay with you guys." They both nodded. El and Nancy left a couple minutes after that and Mike, Eddie and Jonathan moved to the living room, where Mike curled up in the recliner. Jonathan and Eddie talked quietly for a bit but eventually quieted when they heard Mike's soft whimpers. They turned to him and saw him clutching the fabric on the arm of the chair, one arm covering his eyes. They looked at each other and didn't say anything else until El and Nancy arrived with Holly and Nora. Nora was asleep and Holly looked like she could fall asleep standing up.

Jonathan and Nancy didn't stay long, they wanted to get home and prepare for tomorrow like everyone else. Nancy hugged Mike and Holly tightly before the small family left, and Eddie went to bed. Or tried to, at least.

"You want to go to bed, Hols?" Mike asked softly. She nodded.

"Can I stay with you two?" She asked. Any other time she'd think it was incredibly childish but she really just wanted to be with her brother. Mike looked at El who smiled softly and nodded.

Thursday, June 21, 1992

What had turned out as a somewhat peaceful morning turned into a horrifying afternoon, when Pennywise decided to show up. The Party had decided to come over after lunch so they could all ride together, and *of course* drop Holly off at home, but Pennywise had different plans.

They were downstairs in the living room talking and Holly was up in her room.

"I, uh, I need to tell you guys something." Lucas said, scratching the

back of his neck. They all turned to him.

"What?" Will asked.

"I had a dream last night and... I know where IT is and how to kill it."

"What?" They all yelled. He cringed a little.

"Where?" Eddie demanded. Lucas glanced at El and immediately looked away.

"Um, the lab."

"The lab." El deadpanned. Lucas nodded.

"Where the gate is."

"How do we kill it?" Max asked.

"Rip it's heart out."

That's when it happened. There was a loud thump and a blood-curdling scream of,

"MIKE!" Mike didn't waste time, he was on his feet yelling at the others.

"Call everyone right fucking now and tell them to go to the lab. We're gonna kill this fucking thing and I don't care if Richie's here or *not*."

He and El rushed up stairs, where it was now strangely quiet, while the others called everyone. Mike tried to open the door but it wouldn't budge. It didn't even have a *lock* on it.

"Holly!" He yelled. "Holly, open the door!" No response. He looked at El, his heart beating a mile a minute. He backed up, pushing her out of the way quickly, took a breath, and ran at the door. Of course, he'd used his bad shoulder but he didn't register it once, as the door actually opened, and his heart really did stop. The exact words Bill told them about, that were written in blood in Bev's old room, were all across the walls.

Mike wasted no time for formalities, he just walked right through a hole in the fence and marched his way towards the entrance of the lab as the others followed. El opened the doors and with one last glance at her parents, Nancy and Jonathan, she followed the others.

She had no clue how Mike knew where to go but he did, but then she noticed the trail of toys and blood through out the halls.

Well, that explains it.

They finally arrived and El was just a little but freaked out by the fact that she was back in here, but she blocked out the memories of *everything* and watched as Mike H took the lead. Mike had slowed down a good bit and was walking next to her.

"Now *that* is what you call a hole to hell." Dustin said, looking at the others and then back at the giant hole in the ground. "Get it? Instead of highway it's hole-"

"We get it, Dustin." The chorused. He pouted.

"Tough crowd." He muttered.

"Is this where we're fighting?" Lucas asked. "Because if so we're all fucked. If not how are we supposed to get down there."

"You're not." Pennywise appeared, giggling. "But..." He drawled. "None of you will be making it out of here. Especially Eleven. You... you will make me powerful. Even more so than I already am." He started walking forward.

"Mike! Help!" Holly yelled. Mike's eyes darted over to Holly, who was tied up in what looked like webs. He looked at El, who was ready to crush Pennywise's heart and be done with it, so he decided to make a run for it. Mike H went with him, but Pennywise made a sudden turn and ran full speed at Mike H and sent him flying into a wall. Everyone screamed, a few rushing to him and the rest going towards Pennywise, who now had his gaze fixated on El. Steve whacked him with the bat and just barely missed getting his head cut off by

a *fucking saw blade* attached to Pennywise's hand.

"Not cool, dipshit." Steve grunted.

"Mike, oh my God." Holly cried in relief as he cut her free. She latched on to him tightly, sobbing into his chest.

"I'm so sorry." He whispered. "I'm so sorry."

"It's okay, it's not your fault." She said. "IT turned into a giant spider." That explained the webs.

"Mike!" Mike H called. Mike looked over at him and saw him walking towards him with Stan following closely.

"Mike's gonna take Holly and get her out. He hurt his shoulder." Stan explained. Holly looked at Mike. He hugged her tightly and kissed her head.

"I'll be fine, and so will you, okay? He'll take care of you. Nancy's outside with the others." He told her. She nodded and sniffed, took Mike H by the hand and they left. Mike watched until they were completely out of sight, turned, and joined the fight.

37. Final Fight Part Two

Notes for the Chapter:

> Fuck a schedule I couldn't wait so here you go. Next chapter will be posted on the 25 though, along with the epilogue cus I'm done w it already lmao.
>
> You know if there was a way to like kill me through the comments I'd be a dead ass mother fucker at the end of this chapter, You're Welcome.
>
> This does have a happy ending I promise.

Richie got out of the car he'd rented at exactly 4:30, and was immediately confused at the lack of cars in the driveway. He'd decided to go to Mike's first, because he figured that after yesterday this was where everyone would meet. He searched around a little for the spare key Mike told him about and eventually found it, unlocking the door and looking around. He looked in the living room, which was a bit of a mess considering El usually kept it clean. He made a face and wandered into the kitchen, and immediately saw a note on the fridge. He took it off and started reading.

There was a change of plans, Rich, we had to go a lot earlier than expected. Holly was taken and we're going to get her. We're at the lab, just follow the trail of possible destruction and children's toys. This note was written at 4:21 PM so I honest to God hope you're back in time to help. ~ Eddie

If Richie was being honest, he didn't even read the rest of the note, he just dropped it and ran to the car, putting it in reverse and out onto the road. He sped toward the lab as quickly as he could, glancing at the bat in the seat next to him. Yeah, he brought the exact same bat he smacked Pennywise with the first time. He came to a sudden stop when he saw a small group of people huddled around a couple cars. He jumped out with the bat, and rushed over to them. It was Hopper, Nancy, Jonathan, Holly, and an injured Mike H.

"Richie!" Holly screeched and ran to him. He hugged her tightly, almost picking her up in the process.

"Th-the note said IT got you." He said quietly, but they heard him. He looked at the others.

"Mike got in there and brought her back out." Hopper told him.

"I'm sorry I wasn't there to protect you, Holly." He told her, hugging her tightly. He looked at Mike H and gave him a grateful smile. He just nodded back to him.

"It's okay. I'm fine now." She gave him a smile. He smiled a small smile back.

"Everyone in there?" He asked. They nodded. He grabbed his bat and lit a cigarette. "Well, I better get in there."

"Be careful. I don't want to lose you again." Nancy told him quietly. He hugged her with one arm.

"You won't." He took off through the hole in the gate and into the lab.

It didn't take long for him to find the battle ground, he just followed the toys on the ground, and when he did, everything seemed to freeze. Pennywise, who was literally about to bite into Bill's shoulder, froze and looked at him. Richie continued on, swinging his bat around and taking a puff of his cigarette as everyone watched him, frozen mid swing or mid aim.

"Hmf, I'm sort of offended. You guys didn't wait on me for the party to start!" He exclaimed, mock hurt. "Oh, hey ol' Penny ol' pal? Did ya miss me?" Richie grinned, flicking the cigarette on the ground and putting it out with his shoe. "Because I sure didn't miss you, ya know."

"Beep beep, Richie." Pennywise dropped Bill and slowly, creepily, walked towards to Richie. "Finally, I get my revenge-"

"Revenge? For what? Oh, this lil ol' thing?" He held the bat up. "Yeah, it wants some revenge too. You fucking tried to kill my little sister, and you tried to take a bite out of my friend there. I'm not too happy,

ya know?"

"You can't stop Pennywise now." Pennywise giggled. "I feed on your fear, Richie. You know what your fear is, do you?"

"Yeah, your mom." Richie shrugged. He could have sworn he heard some one snort.

"Richie..." Eddie said softly. Richie glanced at him. He had a thin trail of blood running down the side of his head, but other than that, he looked fine. No trace of black goo on him this time around.

"Don't you worry Eds, we're gonna kill this bastard, once and for all."

"You can't!" Pennywise giggled again. "My home is gone! No returning for Pennywise, oh no!"

"Your home, is gone." Mike growled. Richie looked at him. He looked a little worse for wear, paler than usual, if that's even possible, sweat dripping from his chin, dark blood stains on his left shoulder. "You have no where to go."

"You're no longer invincible." Bill glared.

"You aren't connected to that place anymore, you're not immortal." Lucas sneered.

"You can't kill me!" He giggled. "I'm too fast! Too scary! Strong, yes, Pennywise is very strong." He started towards Lucas, but Richie stopped him dead in his tracks.

"You wanted me, come and get me, mother fucker." Richie growled, gripping the bat. "You've wanted me this entire time, so just leave them alone, why don't ya?"

"Stronger together..." Pennywise whispered. "Not scared."

"I'm not afraid of you." Richie said.

"None of us are." Eddie spit.

"You're afraid of us, now, just like when we were kids." Bev

continued.

"No, no! Pennywise not afraid... Pennywise hungry." His eyes glowed and he snarled. He did a complete one eighty and charged at Richie. Richie heard gunshots and it slowed Pennywise down, but he put all his strength into it and swung.

"Welcome back, asshole!" He yelled, hitting Pennywise in the face as hard as he could, which sent him spiraling to the floor in a heap. Pennywise growled and got up again, but everyone started attacking him.

"No, no! No, no!" Pennywise giggled menacingly, throwing an arm out and swinging blindly, throwing Max, Mike, Ben, and Eddie into a wall. Another arm, and Bev, Bill, Stan, Dustin, and Lucas were sent flying through the air and landed in a heap on the ground. Only El, Richie, and Will were left standing as the others attempted to get up.

"Will, go help them." Richie muttered, nudging him towards them. Will looked at him, eyes wide. "Help. Them." He demanded, and turned back towards Pennywise.

He came barreling towards them again, mouth wide open, hundreds of sharp, rotten teeth, readying to tear into them. Richie hit Pennywise with his bat again, and this time, Pennywise anticipated it, and swung an arm out, hitting him and throwing Richie through the air. He hit the wall hard and swore he passed out for a couple seconds because when he opened his eyes again, everyone was up and Mike was standing in front of him.

"Richie? Dude, are you okay?" Richie nodded and sat up. He looked around and saw Pennywise hit everyone again, grabbing Bev by the throat and holding her in the air. She kicked at him, spitting in his face. Richie stood, seeing nothing but red, and picked up his bat.

"You mother fucker!" He yelled. "Let her go!" Pennywise looked towards him, snarling. He turned his attention back to Bev and his face started to open up. A light began shining and her eyes started to glaze over. "No! Take me!" He yelled and Pennywise looked back at him. "Let her go, and take me. You wanted me, take *me.*" He pleaded. Pennywise dropped her and she started gasping for breath. Bill, Ben,

and Stan rushed to her and everyone else towards Richie and Pennywise. Richie dropped the bat and stared at Pennywise as his face opened up and he stared into the lights.

Eddie hadn't realized what was actually happening until it was too late and Richie started floating.

"NO!" He screamed. "You MOTHER FUCKER!" He picked up Richie's bat and started swinging blindly, not even registering any of the hits until everyone else had joined in while Mike and Stan got Richie back down.

El suddenly threw out a hand, pushing everyone a way and taking hold of Pennywise. He kept his eyes on her, snarling, but frozen in place. Everyone was watching the whole encounter, breathing hard. She put both hands out, pushing Pennywise back until he was against the wall. To Mike, Dustin, and Lucas, it was almost like they were back in seventh grade, watching her save them from the demogorgan.

"You've killed so many innocent children. You. Killed. Ted. You were going to kill Holly, my niece, everyone I love." She growled. "You hurt my friends, but... No. More..." She threw out a hand, slamming Pennywise into the wall, hard. She did it again, a couple times. All Pennywise did was giggle, slobber running down his chin. Slowly, he turned into an older man, white hair and cold blue eyes...Brenner.

"Eleven...You don't want to hurt me, do you? I'm your papa. I'll *always* be your pa-" She flicked her chin up and his mouth shut. He turned back into Pennywise, wiggling and trying to get out of her grip. Blood was pouring from both of her nostrils. His eyes looked as though they were going to pop out of his head, and blood started pouring out of them, out of his nose, his mouth, and his ears. She yanked one arm back, and out came his heart, blood squirting out everywhere as all movement ceased.

"No. More." She dropped her hands, and Pennywise's body fell in a heap and the heart dropped with a wet thump. Everyone stared at her, shock, then relief flooding through them. Mike is the only one who reacted. He ran towards her and fell to his knees as she fell to hers. He caught her before she could hit the ground, and hugged her tight. She hugged him back.

"You did it." He whispered soothingly. "You did it, it's over."

38. Aftermath

Notes for the Chapter:

> I mean it is the 25th for me. 12:25 AM! HA
>
> At the end of this one it isn't exactly happy cus ya know, funerals aren't a happy thing so uhh... yeah!
>
> The song used in this doesn't belong to me, it's Good Grief by Bastille, it's the slowed version in this and I cried the first time I heard it (as in I saw it in a what if Eleven hadn't save Mike video).
>
> I'm gonna post the epilogue a couple hours after this one so be on the look out!

"No!" Eddie cried, grabbing at his hair as he looked at Richie's still form. "How do I fix him? What do I do?"

"Kiss him." Ben said. Everyone turned to him. Mike helped El stand and walked over to them. Mike stared at Richie as Eddie leaned up and kissed him on the mouth for a couple seconds and pulled away. Nothing happened.

"It took a couple seconds when you did it, Ben, didn't it?" Eddie asked hurriedly. Ben nodded. It was another minute of complete silence and no one moved. Eddie let out a loud cry and sank to the floor, Bev rushing to him and pulling him into her arms. Mike's mouth dropped open and his heart sank. He made sure El was okay to stand and slowly made his way over to Richie, swallowing harshly. He reached both hands up and hesitated for a second, and put his hands on either side of Richie's head.

"I can't lose you, Rich." Mike whispered, his voice cracking even then. "Not again. Please... wake up. I want you to be in my wedding, you know? I... you can't if you don't wake up. Wake up." He put his forehead against Richie's and closed his eyes, letting out a shuddering

breath. He didn't see Richie's eyes turn back to their normal brown, ones identical to his own. He didn't see the tears begin falling, or the wide grin that spread across his face. Richie moved his arms and wrapped Mike in a hug.

"It's gonna take a lot to drag me away from you." He attempted to joke. Mike jumped back, hands slightly raised in front of him. Mike blinked a couple times, processing it. He smiled for the first time in what felt like forever and nearly tackled Richie to the ground in a hug.

"Richie!" Everyone exclaimed, and suddenly, he was on the floor in a mess of long and short limbs. Eddie had run at him and actually knocked them both down. Mike rolled away, letting out a soft huff of breath as Eddie cried into Richie's chest, hugging him tightly.

"You fucking asshole, never do that *again*!" He exclaimed, smacking his shoulder. Richie chuckled and managed to sit up.

"I can assure that I will never do it again. I saw El kill the fucker and a giant magic turtle told me it was over." Everyone stared at him. Mike sat up and furrowed his brows.

"What kind of drugs are you on?" Will asked, seeming genuinely concerned. Richie just grinned brightly.

"I will be glad to explain later, because Ed's here is about to squeeze me to *death*."

"Damn it, Eddie." Richie shook his head. They were on the way back to Mike and El's house, and Richie insisted that he was okay to drive as long as he had his Eddie Spaghetti with him. "I fucking beat a demon clown with a bat. Again."

"It amazes me that you thought to bring that thing." Richie chuckled.

"I was glad to have it. Felt like old times." Eddie rolled his eyes but noticed something.

"Try to calm down some, okay Chee? You're shaking." Richie then noticed just how bad he was shaking. "Take a deep breath." He took a

couple deep breaths and the shaking ceased a bit.

"Why the hell am I shaking, Eds?"

"Nerves." He replied. "I'm shaking too. Adrenaline, I guess." Richie nodded and swallowed. They were quiet the rest of the ride. When they got to Mike and El's house, everyone was already inside. They rushed in, and everyone turned to look at them.

"Where's Mike?" Richie demanded.

"With El." Stan told him.

"Where is she?" Eddie asked, squeezing Richie's hand as he let out a breath of relief.

"She'll be fine." Hopper piped up from his position on the couch. "She just needs a lot of rest. She's upstairs sleeping."

"What about Holly?"

"We dropped her off back at home." Ben explained. "Figured it'd be better for her since we have a lot to talk about and she needs rest."

It was quiet for a while, while Eddie checked around on everyone, making sure they were okay. Richie sat on an arm chair, his face in his hands.

"What the fuck, Richie?" Bev demanded, walking into the living room. She'd been in the bathroom with Bill, cleaning up each other's cuts and bruises. Richie turned to look at her, raising an eyebrow.

"What?"

"Why did you do that?"

"What? Save you from floating?"

"Yes! We could have lost you, idiot! Like honest to God lost you this time!"

"You can't say a goddamn thing, Beverly. You literally told me to go

kill myself not even a week ago. You wouldn't miss me if I hadn't woken up."

"Yes the hell I would! You're my best friend. I don't know why I said that, Richie, and I'm sorry. I'll do whatever I can to make it up to you. I'll- I'll fucking go back to Derry with you and fight Greta or something if you want me to." She was crying, stomping her foot a little for emphasis. Richie rolled his eyes and sighed, looking at the other Losers.

"And you fuckers call me dramatic." He grumbled. He crossed his arms. "Look, I forgive you and all Bev, but that doesn't mean it didn't hurt. I was honestly gonna go find a bar and drink til I died or something." He shrugged. "I'd actually like a drink to be honest but it doesn't seem like the right time."

"I think I have beers in the fridge if you want one." Mike said, walking down the stairs. He was shirtless, a completely red bandage taped to his shoulder, harsh against his pale skin.

"What the fuck." Richie deadpanned. "Dude, if you think that's a good look for you, you've got it all *wrong*." Mike rolled his eyes fondly. "But I will gladly take you up on the offer." He made his way to the kitchen.

"Michael Wheeler, I told you not to put a lot of strain on your shoulder." Eddie scolded him, pulling him all the way into the living room and making him sit on the couch.

"I kind of broke down a door and got thrown into a wall a couple times so I'm not sure I could stop it, Eddie." Eddie sighed.

"True, sorry. This is probably the worst injury we have and it wasn't even from today. I mean Mike H dislocated his shoulder but it'll heal pretty quick since we popped it back into place."

"Oh that's what the yell was?" Richie yelled from the kitchen. "And here I thought someone was getting frisky with it!"

"Beep Beep mother fucker!" Eddie yelled, then cringed at the use of *beep beep*. He relaxed a little when he heard Richie laugh. "Ben,

can you hand me the first aid kit over there?" He asked, pealing off the old bandages quickly. Ben nodded and handed it to him, whereas he placed it in Mike's lap. Dustin, Max and Bill watched him curiously as he cleaned the blood away and then dabbed at the cuts with alcohol.

"Are you sure it doesn't need to be stitched?" Joyce asked, worriedly, sitting next to Mike and taking his hand in hers and squeezing lightly.

"Positive. If he needed stitches I could stitch him up. Even if he did it'd be too late, the hospital would just do what I'm doing now."

"Have you ever thought about going to medical school?" Hopper asked. Eddie jumped a little at a particularly loud grunt coming from Mike and apologized.

"Uh, yeah but..." He glanced at him sheepishly. "I wouldn't be able to afford it on my own. My mom is kinda..."

"Fucking insane." Richie stated, leaning against the door frame with a half empty bottle of beer in one hand.

"Yeah, that. She agreed for me to go to school to be a pharmacist as long as I stayed in Derry, like to actually work."

"Well, Eddie, do you still wanna go to med school?" Richie asked. Eddie raised an eyebrow, noting how serious Richie was being as he'd used his actual name.

"Yeah, but-"

"No buts, Eds. Yes or no?"

"Yes."

"You're going to med school." He pointed at him with his free hand. Eddie stopped what he was doing and looked at Richie.

"But-"

"I said no buts." He took a swig out of the bottle. "I can take care of the expenses."

"Richie, med school is really expensive." Stan said, eyeing him idly.

"I'm well aware of that, Staniel. Did you forget that I was an only child and my parents, excuse me, adopted parents, were pretty damn well off?" He asked, tilting his head. Everyone felt the mood shift instantly at his words. "They had a shit ton of money in the bank already, a couple hundred thousand, and the bank said they'd help me figure out everything. And I'll have to sell the dental practice and the house, but I still need to go through it- Oh, Bev?" He turned to her. She raised an eyebrow.

"Yeah?"

"Come with me." He gestured for her to follow and went back in the kitchen.

"Were you serious about going back to Derry and beating Greta's ass?"

"I mean not exactly but I can?"

"I don't want you to do that." He said softly. "That be pretty funny though. I, uh, I could barely go in that house, Bev." He wouldn't look at her. "You know they got sober? The house was actually clean and there were pictures of me all over the place. I could only go to the living room and kitchen, couldn't even suck it up and go to my old room." He tapped his fingers on the counter for a second. "Um, I want to go through everything there but... I don't want to do it alone. And... I know I'll have Eddie but there's a lot of stuff in that house and everyone else will be back in school so they won't be able to help and I just can't deal with the memories of that fucking place by myself."

"Richie, breath." She put her hands on his shoulders and squeezed. He sighed and relaxed a bit.

"Sorry." He muttered.

"Don't be. I'll come back with you and we'll sort you out, okay? I promise." He gave her a smile and leaned forward, kissing her forehead and pulling her in for a hug.

"Thank you for saving me." She mumbled into his chest, gripping the

back of his shirt.

"You're my best friend, I'd do it over and over again, Bev." He said. He felt her smile and smiled a little himself. After a couple seconds she pulled back, making a face.

"When's the last time you showered?"

"Rude." He grumbled. "Uh... Monday." He said simply. She stared at him. "I wasn't in my right mind at all this week, Bev." He shook his head. "Bill's parents probably thought I was mentally insane with the way I was acting, I didn't even make a joke the entire time I was there." She smiled sadly. "I haven't eaten since yesterday either." Her eyes widened at that.

"What the fuck, Richard?" She repeated Eddie's words from yesterday. He grinned sheepishly. "I don't understand how you can live alone most of the time."

"Me neither, honestly." She grabbed his hand and pulled him into the living room, leaving the beer on the counter.

"Richie is gonna go take a shower because he hasn't washed in three days." She announced. Eddie made a disgusted face.

"Before any of you say anything, I had a bad week, cut me some slack." Most of them just rolled their eyes.

"You remember where the towels and stuff are?" Mike asked, leaning his head back and looking at Richie upside down. Richie chuckled and nodded, booping Mike's nose before heading upstairs to shower, grabbing a change of clothes from he and Eddie's shared room.

"While he does that, I'm gonna order food, what does everyone want?" Bev asked. Majority wanted pizza so she ordered a shit ton.

Nancy was waiting in the hall when Richie came out of the bathroom and he almost screamed. He let out a tiny shriek and covered his mouth. She laughed. He leaned against the wall and sighed, rubbing his eyes.

"You okay?" Nancy asked him. He chuckled.

"I'm fine physically..." He told her. "Mentally and emotionally? Not exactly." He slid until he was sitting on the floor so she sat next to him. She didn't say anything for a minute.

"Everything is fucked up, but you know what?"

"What?" He looked at her and she put an arm around his shoulders.

"We've got you back." She said simply. "I never thought we'd see you again, when you and Mike were born. I've got a picture somewhere at home of me holding the both of you. I was only three, but I'm pretty sure I had the biggest smile on my face." He stared at her so she continued, "And when I saw you again, that night, I never thought I'd feel as happy as I did then. I mean, I did when Nora was born, but you know what I mean. I got my little brother back, and then you left, and I really never thought I was going to see you again."

"I'm sorry." He whispered.

"Don't be, like I said, you had a job to do and you did it. You came back again, you helped us. If it wasn't for you walking in like you did with that damn bat, Bill would be dead. And Dustin would either be dead or missing an arm. You saved his life." Richie snorted quietly.

"All I did was walk in with a bat, it wasn't that amazing."

"Dustin thinks everything is amazing, Rich. Trust me. I danced with him at their eighth grade snowball and he thought it was the best thing ever." He chuckled wetly. "He's grateful. You can see it in his face when you look at him." Richie sniffed and bowed his head, burying his face in his hands.

"Sorry." He mumbled, sniffing again

"Hey, don't you start crying now." She said, nudging him lightly. "I'm the worst person to be crying around, I usually make it worse."

"No, that's me." He mumbled. He shook his head and stared at the wall. "Dad's dead." He said simply. "Dad's dead." He repeated slowly, as if just realizing what it meant. "I...I-What happened? I heard El say it but..."

"He got shot." She told him, her own tears prepared to fall. "Mike, Hopper and Troy were out on Mirkwood, searching the ditches and woods. Apparently, Troy was possessed by IT and was going to shoot Mike, but dad came up out of nowhere and he was shot instead. Troy dropped dead. This happened yesterday, and Mike hasn't been able to tell us everything dad said before..." He nodded for her to go on. "I know you were mentioned, but that's all he said. He died in Mike's arms, and he tried...he tried *so hard* to bring him back, and so did the paramedics but... Hopper had to hold Mike back, said he was screaming and crying." Richie didn't reply for a couple minutes.

"I barely knew him."

"I know." She said quietly. "He wasn't always the best dad but he was there for us and loves us. At least you two got to meet." He nodded, biting his lip.

"I'm glad we got pictures, too." He said. She nodded in agreement and laid her head on his shoulder. They sat that way for a while until they heard Max yell at the top of her lungs,

"PIZZA'S HERE!" Her voice cracked at the end and Nancy snorted. The two got up and when they did, Mike and El's bedroom door opened and an exhausted looking El walked out. Her face was cleared of blood and dirt, and Richie figured Mike had cleaned her up while she slept.

"I'm going to kill her." She grumbled, walking ahead of them. "But I'm hungry and I love pizza so she might live." Richie giggled and Nancy shook her head fondly. There was a stack of pizza's on the coffee table and everyone was sitting on the floor passing some around, holding either paper plates or paper towels. Everyone had cleaned up as much as they could considering, and Mike was wearing a tank top now, his shoulder freshly bandaged. He looked up and saw El, and immediately scooted over as she made her way over to him, grabbing her some pizza and handing it to her. She smiled at him and sat down, curling up next to him and taking a bite out of a slice. She pointed it at Max and said, "When I go back to sleep after I'm done eating, if you yell like that again I will hold you over the cliff at the quarry."

"That'd be pretty cool though." Max said cheekily.

"Try me." She looked at everyone else. "That goes for the rest of you. I'm gonna do it to Richie just for tying to sacrifice himself."

"Excuse me." Richie pouted. Then he grinned, taking a giant bite out of his pizza and sitting next to Eddie. "That would be pretty cool." El whined.

"Why is it Mike's the only one afraid of heights. You people are no fun."

"Yeah but Mike has a good reason to be." Dustin pointed out.

"Bite me." She rolled her eyes.

"That's Mike's job." He retorted. She threw a pillow at him and knocked his hat off. Everyone made small talk as they ate, that is, until Bill asked,

"Are we g-gonna talk about it?"

"About what?" Jonathan asked.

"Um, w-well, the fact th-that we think R-Richie's on drugs." Richie laughed at that.

"I think I talked to a turtle one time, too, come to think of it." Bev said. "When I looked into the lights, I mean. I felt scared, like I did today, and I know we were older then but I didn't know we'd be this age. What did you see, Rich?" Richie had a dazed look on his face.

"We... We're free." He said, looking at them. "It's all over, everything. The Upside Down, IT, paranormal shit, it's done. We can have kids now."

"Huh?" Almost everyone gave him a weird look.

"We wouldn't have been able to have kids until after we killed IT for real. I don't know, ask the turtle. I just know that life is gonna be good." He made a face. "God, I do sound like I'm on drugs." He looked at Mike, then Hopper, "I've said it, probably a hundred times, but I'll

say it again, I've never done anything other than drink and smoke cigarettes, no need to arrest me, Chief Hoppy and Officer brother sirs." Mike closed his eyes and sighed, raising his eyebrows as he opened them again and gave Richie a look, resulting in him giggling like a little girl.

"Hey Stan?" Steve asked. Stan turned to him.

"Yeah?"

"Richie called you a stupid little bird man." Richie's eyes nearly popped out of his head as Stan glared at him and everyone else laughed. Richie pouted and glared at Steve.

"Snitch."

Friday, June 22, 1992

"So where do we go from here?" Lucas asked the next day, when everyone was well rested and decided to meet up at Bev's house and then to the quarry to celebrate.

"Well..." Bill said. The Losers looked at each other, "I'm starting my last year of college this fall, and when I graduate I plan on moving here."

"I'll be starting my last year too, so's Stan." Ben said, gesturing to him. "Not sure what I'm gonna do after, though, maybe travel around, sight see..."

"Look for love." Dustin added. Ben rolled his eyes.

"I might move here too." Stan said, shrugging.

"The three of us are in our last year too." Will said, gesturing to himself, Lucas, and Dustin.

"I will be planning a wedding." El grinned lazily at Mike, who grinned back.

"I'll be making El's wedding dress." Bev gave her a pointed look and

El giggled.

"The farm is kinda... on it's last leg so I might move here too, I like it here." Mike H said, smiling a little. The others grinned.

"We'd love to have you out here, all of you." El told them, resting her chin on Mike's head, standing behind him.

"Our dad's funeral is on Monday." Mike said quietly, as if just realizing it himself. He shook his head. "Sorry to bring the happy mood down but..."

"Do you need to talk about it, Mike?" Will asked softly. Mike shook his head.

"No, I just thought I'd mention it."

"Speaking of that, um..." Richie fiddled with his fingers and glanced at the piano in the corner. "I wrote a song, over the week, that applied to Went and Mags but it applies to dad now too, and everyone else we've, *all*, lost. I wanted you guys opinions on it." He was visibly nervous, which was rare for anyone to see. He looked at Mike, who nodded encouragingly. Everyone else nodded in agreement. He nodded once and stood up, walking over to the piano and taking a seat. "Uh, let it be known that this is incredibly sad." He said, his fingers beginning to drift over the keys.

Watching through my fingers, watching through my fingers
Shut my eyes and count to ten
It goes in one ear out the other, one ear out the other
Burning bright right till the end
Now you'll be missing from the photographs, missing from the photographs

Watching through my fingers, watching through my fingers
In my thoughts you're far away
And you are whistling the melody, whistling the melody
Crystallizing clear as day
Oh, I can picture you so easily, picture you so easily

His voice was deep with emotion, and everyone else had tears in their eyes.

What's gonna be left of the world if you're not in it?
What's gonna be left of the world, oh

Every minute and every hour
I miss you, I miss you, I miss you more
Every stumble and each misfire
I miss you, I miss you, I miss you more

Monday, June 25, 1992

You might have to excuse me
I've lost control of all my senses
And you might have to excuse me
I've lost control of all my words
So get drunk, call me a fool
Put me in my place, put me in my place
Pick me up, up off the floor
Put me in my place, put me in my place

Every minute and every hour
I miss you, I miss you, I miss you more
Every stumble and each misfire
I miss you, I miss you, I miss you more

Watching through my fingers, watching through my fingers
'Cause every minute and every hour
I miss you, I miss you, I miss you more

Richie's fingers slowed over the keys as he felt tear drops fall on them. He could hear his little sister crying, he heard the sniffles of his brother and older sister, his mom *sobbing*. He stilled for a moment as the last notes faded away and made his way back to his seat. Eddie rubbed his arm comfortingly and squeezed his hand. Richie felt another hand find it's way to his and glanced to his right, where Mike had grabbed his hand. He squeezed gently and Mike looked at him, and nodded.

"You did good." Mike whispered to him.

"Thanks." Richie whispered back. He'd have said more but the priest

stood and he turned his attention back to the front, where the casket was.

"Let us pray."

For the second, technically *third* time in a week, Richie dropped a single rose into a grave, after Nancy and before Mike did. The family of what had been six for such a short time, now five, stood huddled together as they covered the casket.

Richie didn't full on cry until he was alone with his mom for the first time since Ted died. The two were in the basement, her having asked Richie to help her with something.

"I didn't actually need help." She told him, sitting on the couch and patting the space next to her. He raised an eyebrow but sat down. "I just wanted to talk to you, privately. No one's told me where you went last week or why, and I just want to make sure you're okay." He didn't say anything for a minute or so. He wouldn't look at her, but when he did, tears were falling.

"You're not allowed to die." He whispered. "Not yet. I can't lose you too." Her mouth dropped open a little in shock and threw her arms around him, pulling him close as he cried into her shoulder. "This w-was the s-second funeral in a w-week." He hiccuped. "Went, M-Mags, dad... they're all *gone* and I-I don't *know what to do, mom.*" She didn't reply, she just ran her fingers through his hair gently as he cried, comforting him in a way only she could. He cried for what felt like hours, but it was only a few minutes. When he calmed down enough, she said,

"There's nothing you can really do, baby." She said softly, resting her cheek on the top of his head. "They aren't suffering anymore. They're happy where ever they are. Your father loved you, Richie, so much. I know he didn't seem like it most of the time, but he was a good man. And Went and Maggie, they're not killing themselves anymore, they're happy too."

"They were sober when they died." He hiccuped. "Six months clean. It was another drunk driver that killed them."

"At least they got better." She offered. He sniffed and nodded into her shoulder.

"Yeah."

39. Epilogue

Notes for the Chapter:

> Guess what fuckers, this is the last chapter and we've got some very exciting things coming your way! Gotta read and find out but some of you get what you've been waiting for ;)
>
> Be sure to read the note at the end too guys! It's very VERY important!

Friday, June 26, 1992
7 PM

"Babe I'm home!" Max yelled, trudging into the house, dropping her bag on the floor and kicking her shoes off. "It's hot as all *hell* outside. It's like were standing in Satan's ass crack." She heard him snort from the kitchen.

"Don't come in here!" He called back. "I have a surprise and it's not ready yet." She laughed.

"Okay, I'm gonna go shower 'cause I stink."

"You do that." She rolled her eyes and made her way upstairs. She'd been working all day in the heat, as the A/C at the arcade was absolute shit because Keith wouldn't call someone to fix it. There was one good thing about today, though, and it was something she'd been thinking about for a while now, and finally decided on. She showered, towel dried her hair, changed into a tank top and shorts, and made her way downstairs. Lucas was waiting for her at the bottom, dressed in similar wear, but with his camouflage bandanna on. She raised an eyebrow and wrapped her arms around his neck.

"What's with the bandanna?" She asked. He shrugged.

"Just felt like wearing it, for old times sake."

"I'm surprised it still fits your big ass head." He snorted and rolled his eyes.

"You're one to talk. Just imagine how big our kids heads are gonna be."

"Oh fuck, I haven't thought about that." She made a face. "I will definitely have a C-section then. Fuck pushing a giant watermelon out of my lady bits." He sighed, shaking his head fondly.

"Thanks for not being too... vulgar with your choice of words." He pecked her on the lips and grabbed her hand, pulling her towards the kitchen. "How was work?" He asked, already knowing the answer.

"Oh my *God* it was terrible. Keith is being suck a dick, saying I should suck it up and work in fucking hundred degree heat. I think the fuck not. If he doesn't get it fixed soon I'm fucking quitting. I don't know how those kids do it."

"We used to do it." He retorted.

"Yeah but that was when we were used to the heat and shit. It still sucked either way, ya nerd. I felt bad for El, almost every time she was with us during that year we were either at the arcade or Mike's house and his basement used to be the *worst*." He pulled out a chair for her at the table and she gave him a smile.

"Trust me, I remember. I was in their basement every weekend for twelve years." She snorted and watched as he went over to the microwave and pulled out two plates of food. She raised an eyebrow and looked at him as he set it in front of her. It was her favorite, steak and fries. Before she could say anything, he said,

"I don't know why you like those fries so much. They're okay but not the *best*."

"I'll fight you on that."

"What about Benny's fries?" He said, pointing a fork at her. She froze, fork half way to her mouth. She pointed it at him.

"True."

Throughout their dinner, Lucas was kind of antsy, and she had an idea of why, but decided not to bring it up.

"So..." She said once she finished. He looked at her. "I have something I want to tell you."

"Are you pregnant?" He asked immediately. She made a face.

"No, Stalker. Why, you paranoid?"

"No it's just... Richie said that we could have kids now and it kinda freaks me out a bit."

"Pretty sure that didn't apply to us, Lucas." She rolled her eyes. He chuckled.

"True. Anyways, what is it?"

"Well, I've been thinking about it for a while, and I'd have told you but I wanted to make up my mind myself, you know?" He nodded. "I want to go to college." He raised an eyebrow.

"Really? For what?"

"Game design. I'd go to the community college here, obviously, so it won't cost as much. What do you think? I mean I still plan to go but I want your opinion too." He snorted.

This is why I love her.

"I love you." He said. "Whatever you want to do, Max, whatever makes you happy. I think you'd do really well."

"Really?" She smiled wide. He nodded.

"Really." She stood and leaned over the table, pecking him on the lips. She sat back down, a grin on her face.

"Is there a particular reason for this insanely awesome dinner?"

"Not particularly, no." He gave her a smile "I know you know what I'm about to do, but I really hope you say yes." He stood up and she

scooted her chair back and turned in it. He got down on one knee in front of her, took a black box out of his pocket and opened it, revealing a simple, silver diamond ring. " I love you, and I want to spend the rest of my life with you and make big headed babies. Marry me?" She slapped a hand over her mouth, muffling a loud laugh and nodded, holding out her left hand. He grinned and put the ring on her finger. A perfect fit. He mad a mental note to thank El for helping him with it.

"I love you too. I can't *wait* to *make* those babies."

Saturday, July 4, 1992

"GUYS!" Richie yelled at the top of his lungs, jogging around the side of his house, Nora chasing after him. "I'm being attacked! Help!" He slowed down and pretended to fall on his face when Nora grabbed his leg, letting out a small shriek, which sent the small girl into a fit of giggles. Eddie rolled his eyes at him.

"Yeah, get him, Nora!" Holly and Nancy cheered. Mike crept up behind her and picked her up, spinning her in the air as she squealed. Richie stood up and jogged over to the rest of the Losers and Party, pretending to be out of breath.

"She's a fast one, I tell ya." He said, wiping his brow. They all laughed or rolled their eyes at him.

"Food will be done in an hour!" Hopper called from where he was grilling. Dustin cheered and went over to him to see if he need help. He'd deny it but it was only so the food would be done quicker. The pig. Mike put Nora on his hip and walked over to them.

"That's gonna be Mike a year after you two get married." Max said, looking at El, who rolled her eyes.

"It's a good look for him though." She said, giving him a grin. He winked at her and Max mocked gagging.

"Okay so I wasn't just screaming about Nora, I actually had something to tell you." Richie said, grinning. Dustin had come back, defeated,

when Hopper wouldn't let him help.

"What?" Eddie asked.

"I'll tell you later." He said, grinning. "Because Lucas and Max have an announcement to make." Eddie scowled at him, as did Max, who turned to the others and grinned. She looked at Lucas, who nodded, and held up her left hand.

"We're engaged!" She exclaimed. El let out a loud squeal and jumped at her, hugging her tight. Everyone started clapping and congratulating them, the boys of course giving Lucas shit about it.

"It's about time, dude." Mike said, smacking Lucas on the shoulder.

"You're one to talk, dude." Lucas rolled his eyes.

"I proposed first *dude*. We've just been waiting on you to do it. Now we're just waiting on Bill or Bev to propose, or Richie or Eddie."

"I'm pretty sure Bev will be the one to propose." El said, looking at him. He snorted and nodded in agreement.

"I actually kinda figured Max would propose to Lucas." Will said, grinning at the two cheekily. Lucas rolled her eyes.

"I was going to, actually." Max said. Lucas looked at her. "Without a ring, of course. I was basically gonna do the same thing he did for me, cook dinner then propose but he got to it first." He chuckled and kissed the side of her head.

"Richie! Why is there a black van with a Trashmouth written on the side in giant red letters?" Karen called.

"Oh that must be the people here to kidnap me." He replied with a wave of his hand. She gave him the stink eye. "What? It's the only way to lure me in." He winked at her and she rolled her eyes. "Come here." He told her. She made her way over to him. "That van belongs to my band." He said, looking at everyone else. "I figured that since it's the fourth of July, we'd need some music, and who else would it be if not for the greatest band in town?"

"We get to see you perform?" Karen asked excitedly.

"Yes ma'am you do!" He grinned. He pointed towards the road. "I'm gonna go grab 'em and tell them to come meet you guys before we start unloading our shit." He ran off.

"I can just imagine how nervous he really is." Eddie said, chuckling. "But you guys, they're so good, it's insane. Ayla is like the Richie equivalent when it comes to outfits."

"There's nothing wrong with that." Mike H said. Eddie suppressed a giggle at that.

"I didn't say there was." He replied.

"Oh my God you are so *cute*!" Ayla exclaimed. They heard a child laughing and figured Nora had followed Richie. They were correct, because Richie came back, leading three other people with Nora on his shoulders.

"She's a wild one, I tell you." Richie said, giving Nora to Jonathan, who chuckled. "Okay guys, this is Ayla, Jack, and Malcolm." He said, "That, there, my talented friends, is my little twin brother, Michael and his fiance El. That's my older sister Nancy and her husband Jonathan and their little baby child Nora, who you've already met. This," He patted Holly on the head, "is my hair braiding little sister Holly. And this lovely lady is my mother." He wrapped an arm around Karen, who grinned up at him. He gave her a smile and introduced everyone else.

"It's weird seeing a quiet version of you." Ayla said, gesturing to Mike, who snickered.

"Rude." Richie pouted. "I can be quiet." He said. The Losers scoffed. He pouted again and crossed his arms. "Again, rude."

"Can we go get the stuff now?" Malcolm asked. "I literally can't wait to play again." Richie nodded.

"Yeah, you five year old. Be careful with my shit." He said, giving him a look.

"I broke one singular guitar string last time, come on."

"And it was my *favorite* guitar sting, jack ass."

"What?" Lucas made a face and Richie chuckled.

"Inside joke my dude. Come on, let's go get this set up. Hey mom?"

"Hm?"

"You mind if we plug some stuff up in the house?" She shook her head.

"Have at it." She smiled at him. He nodded and saluted her, and followed the rest of his band back to the van. "God I wish I had some of his energy."

"I think he took all of Mike's in the womb." Dustin said. "Look at the lazy fucker." Mike was laying on a blanket El had put down, with his head in her lap, on the verge of sleep.

"Everyone know's he's lazy, kid." Hopper said, walking over to them and wiping his hands on a towel. "But he had the night shift last night and hasn't gotten any sleep today, as far as I know, so cut him some slack."

"Why'd he take the night shift."

"Because he's a stubborn fucker." Steve said, plopping down in the grass between Dustin and Joyce, who patted his head in greeting. He snorted.

"I'm not deaf you know. Shut it." Mike grumbled, turning onto his side and burying his face in El's thigh. She chuckled and ran her fingers through his hair.

"Mike do you want coffee?" Karen asked.

"No." He mumbled. "But I need it so yes." He made a show of getting up and cracking his back, resulting in a smack on the head from Nancy, who cringed, and followed his mom into the house. El stretched out on the blanket and crossed her ankles, looking at

everyone else.

"Not only is he stubborn, but he's also a child."

"Eleven!" Mike yelled. "You're one to talk!" She stuck her tongue back out at him and he flipped her off before continuing into the house.

"God I love him." She sighed.

"We know." The Party chorused. She flipped them off and closed her eyes, resting her head on her hands.

It took a good bit, but eventually, Richie and his band mates had everything set up, microphones and everything, insisting that everyone on the block should hear, which caused everyone to roll their eyes, but the Losers did agree. They needed to be heard.

"To my brother and future sister in law, get your asses off that blanket and stand up and dance." Richie said into the mic. Mike and El got up, flipping him off in unison. "So, this, my friends and family, is one of my favorite songs to sing, and we did it at the last concert we did, back in Derry. I hope you guys like Joan Jett 'cause she's the *shit.*" They started playing *I Love Rock and Roll* and they *owned* it. Richie jumped around the stage in his own little world, grinning at Eddie and everyone else who sang along to the chorus. He stopped playing his guitar and clapped his hands.

"*I love rock and roll, so put another dime in the jukebox baby,*" He sang, stomping his feet a little to the beat. He winked at Eddie who laughed. He was grinning like an idiot at the end and looked at his band mates. "God, I missed this."

"Do another!" Some random person yelled. Everyone looked around and noticed a good bit of people from the neighborhood had come to see what was going on, other people having fourth of July parties. It wasn't many, only about ten or so people. Richie chuckled and looked at everyone else, who nodded. Karen was fanning her face, smiling at him.

"You guys are gonna go far." She said. He smiled at her.

"Thanks, mom." He pecked her cheek before going back in front of

the mic.

"Anyone here like Huey Lewis?" He asked. Majority cheered and he took that as a yes. He looked at the others and mouthed the song. "This is for the love birds out here, get your asses together and dance." He watched as the couples who hadn't been together moved towards each other and snorted. "This is *The Power of Love.*"

Wednesday, August 5, 1992

"Hi Eddie!" Karen greeted, opening the door more for him to enter. He smiled at her. "Would you like something to drink?"

"No, thank you. I wanted to talk to you, though." He said. She nodded and gestured for him to sit on the couch with her. He did, leg bouncing a little.

"Is everything okay?" She asked, eyebrows furrowing.

"Oh yeah, yeah everything's fine. I just, um... You know I love Richie, right?" He asked. She nodded, smiling. "Well, um... I wanted to... to ask for permission to marry him." She grinned widely and took his hand.

"Of *course* Eddie. You don't have to ask. I love you, we all love you, and I know Richie does." He smiled, relief flooding through him. He didn't know why he'd been so nervous.

"I love you guys too. You're like family to me, real family." She smiled and hugged him.

"Do you have a ring or? I'm sorry, I'm not sure how this works." She asked, pulling away. He bit his lip and nodded. He reached into his pocket and pulled out the small box.

"It's not much, literally." He opened it and showed it to her. "It'll probably break soon but it's all I could afford at the time. I'm gonna get him a new one after I save up some money."

"Hm... wait here." She said and rushed upstairs. She came back a few minutes later and sat back down. She held up a beautiful gold band,

that had a diamond embedded in it. "This was my father's wedding band. He wore it from the time he was 18 years old to the day he died. He wanted Richie or Mike to have it, you know, if Richie ever... found his way back to us. And he did. I think Richie would love this, Mike was happy that his grandpa wanted him to have it but he never really liked it."

"He would, he'd flash it everywhere he goes." Eddie joked. She chuckled and took the box from Eddie's hand. She took the small silver band out of it's spot and put the gold one in it and shut it, handing it back to him. "Are you sure?" He asked.

"Positive." She smiled at him. He hugged her again.

"Thank you."

Saturday, August 8 , 1992

"Eddieeeee!" Richie sand, poking at Eddie's cheeks and nose, waiting for him to wake up. Eddie's face scrunched up and he grunted. "Eddie wake up." Eddie just made a fart noise and tried to turn, but Richie, grinning, took hold his his shoulders and kissed him. He knew Eddie was awake the instant he felt him kissing back, so he pulled away and Eddie whined.

"What?" He grumbled.

"Happy anniversary baby." Eddie's eyes snapped open, only to see Richie's mop of hair covering the majority of his face, but he sure did see the wide grin on his face.

"Holy shit." He muttered. "Happy anniversary, mm, come here."

"What's up with you?" Ben asked, nudging Eddie, who looked at him, an eyebrow raised.

"Nothing, why?" Eddie asked, chewing on his thumb nail.

"You look like you're constipated, Eddie." Mike H said, chuckling at him.

"I do?" The two laughed and nodded, and he blushed, biting his lip instead.

They're all at Steve's having a little get together, mainly to swim while it's still hot out, and to celebrate their sixth anniversary, because Karen insisted that it was a big deal. And it was, because to day was *the* day. He looked up and saw Bill and Bev walking over to them.

"Can I talk to you for a second?" Bev asked him. He nodded and followed her to a fairly empty spot in the yard. "Everyone's outside now, and Jonathan's got his camera. Richie's over there sitting with his mom, Dustin, Mike, and El." Eddie nodded, swallowing harshly. Bev squeezed his shoulder gently. "Don't be nervous, Eds." He scowled at the nickname, but took a deep breath and nodded, and the two walked over to everyone. "We'd like your attention please!" She yelled and everyone turned to them.

Eddie nervously walked over to Richie and just stood in front of him. Richie looked up at him through his glasses, his hair almost covering them.

"What's up, Eds?" He asked, cocking his head to the side slightly. Eddie bit back a *don't call me that,* and gave him a smile.

"Ready to tell them what we talked about?" Richie's eyes widened, right along with his grin.

"Yes!" He jumped up and high fived him. He looked around at everyone. "Okay so do you remember after everything went down, we were all asked, *where do we go from here*?" He started. The Party and Losers nodded. "Well, Eddie and I've been talking a lot, and I'd already decided what I'm gonna do, and now he has." He looked at Eddie to continue.

"I'm gonna take a year off," He began, "and then I'm gonna go to med school in Chicago. Once I finish that, I'll, hopefully, get a job here."

"And *I,* will be going back to Derry for a bit, with both Eddie and Bev, since the rest of you have college and shit to do, to clear out Went and Mags house and sell it, then we're coming back and the

band is moving with me." He grinned at that.

"That's awesome, guys!" Joyce exclaimed, clapping. Everyone joined in. Bev nudged Eddie in the side and he glared at her. He tapped Richie on the shoulder and he looked at him. Eddie took a deep breath.

"I don't usually do this, no, I *never* do this, so I swear you better love me after this." Richie looked confused.

"You know I love ya, Eds." He smiled at him, and Eddie smiled back.

"Richie, we've been through a lot, everyone knows this." Richie just cocked his head to the side again, and Eddie couldn't help but think about how cute he was when he did it. "We've been through so much, together, and I want to continue... together. I love you so much that it... that it hurts, sometimes, you know? I thought I was going to loose you for a minute there, but I didn't, and I'm glad I didn't." Everyone looked on, confused, excited, or both, wondering what was happening. "You're a real idiot, you know that? A stubborn idiot, but you're *my idiot*. I'm so proud of you and of everything you've accomplished, even the small things, like actually owning band-aids, laugh all you want, but we all know it's true." Richie chuckled along with everyone else. Eddie's nerves were still there, but not as bad. "Where do we go from here? Well,"He tucked a hand in his pocket, grabbing the box. "I can't believe I'm doing this *outside* in the *grass* but, Richie Tozier," He got down on one knee and he swore he heard just about every single person out there gasp. "Will you do me the honor of being my idiot forever, and marry me?" He pulled the box out of his pocket and opened it, holding it up for him to see. Richie stared at him, eyes wide. His eyes welled up with tears and he stood up straighter.

"Are you serious?" He whispered. Eddie nodded, and before he had a chance to react, Richie literally tackled him to the ground in a hug, pressing his lips to Eddie's and anywhere else he could reach.

"I...thought...that...was...my...job..." He said between kisses, a giggling Eddie underneath him.

"Is that a yes?" Eddie asked.

"That's a fuck yes." Everyone started laughing and cheering, wolf whistling and screaming. Richie got off of Eddie finally and helped him up. Eddie took the ring out of the box and held it up to him.

"Read what's on the inside." He told him quietly. Richie took it and examined it, and saw the words *forever and always* engraved in it in small letters. He grinned and handed it back to Eddie, who raised an eyebrow. Richie held out his left hand dramatically, wiggling his ring finger expectantly. Eddie laughed and put the ring on his finger as everyone either awe'd or laughed with him. Richie pulled him into an actual hug this time and kind of swayed back and forth a little.

"Now we know who wears the pants in the relationship!" Dustin yelled. Richie pulled away and glared at him. Dustin made an *oh shit* face.

"I thought we already knew that?" Richie asked, grinning. Everyone laughed and started congratulating them. Karen hugged them both for what seemed like forever, even wiping a few tears away and saying,

"I can't believe both my babies are getting married." Richie couldn't keep the smile off his face after that as he hugged his siblings, one by one, and all of his friends. El hugged both he and Eddie tightly and said,

"Welcome to the family, it's official, you're *technically* Wheeler's!" They both laughed and hugged her back. When Richie hugged Bev, she gave him a knowing look.

"You knew, didn't you?" He asked, hugging her.

"Maybe!" She drew out the *e* and he snorted.

"I kn-knew too!" Bill exclaimed, waiting for his hug.

"That's because I told you though." Bev rolled her eyes at him.

"I need pictures!" Karen exclaimed from somewhere in the group of people.

"Jonathan-" Joyce started but he grinned and interrupted her.

"Way ahead of you, mom."

"Hey Eds?" Richie asked as Jonathan got the camera ready to take a picture of them.

"What?"

"Does this make me the bride?"

"I mean, if you wanna be technical, yeah." Eddie shrugged, trying to keep a straight face.

"So I can wear an all white suit?" Eddie snorted and wrapped his arms around Richie's waist.

"Whatever you want, baby."

They got in a good bit of pictures, of just the two, the couples and everyone together. It was after a picture the four Wheeler siblings that it happened. El walked a couple steps away from everyone and leaned over, throwing up everything she'd eaten the last couple hours. Mike's eyes widened.

"Oh baby no." He cooed, rushing over to her and pulling her hair back for her. He cringed a little and looked at everyone else, who looked worried. He shrugged.

"I'm sorry." El said quickly, before throwing up again. Mike swallowed, he *hated* puking. The sight of it, the smell of it, the feeling of it, and he especially hated seeing El do it, knowing he couldn't help her. She stood up a little straighter and wiped her mouth, looking at them sheepishly.

"That was a lot of puke." She said quietly. Bev tossed Mike a bottle of water and he opened it, handing it to El, who cleaned her mouth out a bit and then drank it slowly. "Thanks."

"You okay now?" Hopper asked. Mike rubbed her back as she leaned into him. She nodded.

"I think so. I don't know what's up with me, I've been feeling weird." She said. "Like around the same time every- Oh." Everyone eyed the

two.

"What?" Mike asked, confused. El pulled him down a little and whispered in his ear. "Oh." A look of realization crossed his face. "OH. Oh shit."

"Oh shit is right." She said, grabbing his hand and pulling him with her.

"I'm so confused. What's going on you two?" Dustin asked. No one really knew what was going on, or hadn't registered it yet. Except for the mama's of the group.

"I know. Come with me you too." Nancy said, jogging to reach up to them. Karen and Joyce looked at each other, eyes wide. Karen let out a tiny squeal and threw her arms around Joyce. She looked at Hopper, who had his jaw set.

"You're not killing my son, Hopper." She said. "They're getting married, it was gonna happen either way. And we're not completely sure, but pretty sure." He grumbled something to himself and sat down. Most of the boys were confused and just sat down with everyone else.

Meanwhile, Nancy pulled Mike and El into the bathroom on the main floor and dug around in her purse and pulled out three pregnancy tests, placing them on the counter. Mike eyed them.

"You act like you're the one who has to pee on them, calm down." He glared at her.

"Why-?" El couldn't finish her question because Nancy was already answering.

"I had a feeling." She said. "I bought them the same night Nora kept saying baby."

"Oh." El looked at them, just sitting on the counter. "It's a good thing I have to pee." She said simply.

"I'm gonna leave you two to it. You better come out with smiles or I'm beating both your asses." She left, shutting the door without

another word. Mike stared at the floor for a good minute before El said,

"Mike?" He looked at her, her brown eyes wide and filled with what looked like worry and... hope.

"They said that you probably couldn't get pregnant, El." He said, quietly. "I don't... I don't want to think you are and- and then you're not. I don't wanna get my hopes up." She stepped closer and put a hand on his cheek.

"I know." She whispered. "We have to find out, though." He nodded. "I'd kiss you but I know how you feel about puke. And it's gross." He snorted. She went over to the toilet and lifted her shirt to unbutton her pants and he made a show of turning around.

"Privacy!" He exclaimed jokingly. She burst out laughing.

"Shit, I'm gonna pee on myself instead of the stick." He snorted so hard he coughed. "That sounded *so* wrong. Don't tell Richie I said that."

"Definitely won't."

"I'm literally taking pregnancy tests, Mike, we've had sex. I don't know why you have to turn around when I pee." He shrugged.

"It's *weird*."

"You're weird." He heard the toilet flush and then her zipper and he turned around. He held his arms out to her and she fell into them, hugging him back.

"How long do we have to wait?" He asked.

"The box said five minutes." She said. He nodded into her hair. They stood like that for what seemed like forever. "I think it's been five minutes." She said eventually. He let her go and they looked at each other. "Uh, do you think you could look? I don't know if I can..." He blinked and then nodded.

"Yeah, yeah, uh... yeah." He picked one up and turned it over. "Uh,

what does two lines mean?" El nearly gave herself whiplash with how fast she looked at him.

"No way." She said, shocked. "It means pregnant..." They looked at each other. "What do the other two say?" She asked quickly. He picked up another and she picked up the last. "Two lines..."

"Two." He said, looking at her.

"Mike..." She threw herself at him, wrapping her legs around his waist. He laughed, hugging her back.

"Oh my God." He whispered into her hair. "You're gonna be a mama."

"You're gonna be a daddy." She pulled back a bit and put her hands on his cheeks, wiping at the tears falling. She knew she had tears of her own. "We're gonna be parents."

"I love you."

"I love you too." He tilted his head forward a little and kissed her. They'd have stayed like that if it weren't for someone knocking on the door.

"Hey! You two better not be baby making in there!" Dustin yelled, before walking away. Mike and El looked at each other before bursting into giggles. Mike let her down and she picked up one of the tests and put it in her pocket. The two continued giggling as they made their way outside, and Karen, Nancy and Joyce all screamed at the same time, causing everyone else to jump or scream at the sound. As soon as they were in arms reach, El pulled the test out of her pocket and held it out to Joyce. Karen didn't even stop to look, she just pulled Mike into the tightest hug he'd probably ever had as Nancy hugged her.

"What the hell is even happening?" Bill asked.

"I'm pregnant!" El exclaimed as Mike said,

"El's pregnant!"

"I *just* said you better not be baby making!" Dustin yelled, before

pulling the two into a hug. After a second, Richie pulled him off of them by the back of his shirt and pulled them into a tight hug.

"Dude, are you crying?" Mike asked after hearing a sniffle.

"No... Yes. Sorry, I'm just... I'm gonna be an uncle, man! Like I know I already am but I'll get to see this one grow up from the start and I just... I'm happy." Mike smiled and patted his back.

"You're gonna be an awesome one at that." El said. Richie just smiled. Then he said, with that shit eating grin of his as he pulled away,

"I was right when I said that you two get it on a lot." Eddie, having heard him, sighed.

"Moment. Ruined."

Notes for the Chapter:

~End~

I honestly can NOT believe I've finished this story. It's been a great five months, (that kinda applies to those on fanfiction cus this was posted there first XD) give or take a few days! I love you guys soo much and I'm so so grateful. I never expected to get so much love for this and I'm so happy! You guys have been amazing and thank you to Phieilly for all your help!

Now this isn't actually where the story ends. What do you guys think about me writing a sequel? It'll just be their lives after. No monsters, no evil whatsoever will be in it, just all the happy times. We'd be watching them grow and have families of their own. Thoughts?:) <3

40. Sequel Preview!

Summary for the Chapter:

> Decided I wanted to give you guys a little preview to the sequel! I'm still working on the first couple chapters, so once I get to a decent number I'll post!
>
> Sorry it's short but like, it's a preview? So it's supposed to be. Hope you guys like! ;)

Tuesday, August 11, 1992

"So, do you two plan to get married before or after the baby gets here?" Eddie asked, taking a sip from his drink. He and Richie had gone out to dinner with Mike and El.

"Before, we actually already have the date." El said, giving them a bit of a shy smile.

"What?" Richie shrieked then slapped a hand over his mouth. Mike made a face. "Sorry, that was loud."

"Never bothered you before." Eddie said, raising an eyebrow. Richie stuck his tongue out at him.

"What's the date?" Richie asked.

"November twenty eighth." Mike replied instantly. Richie raised his own eyebrow and chuckled.

"Eager, are we? I mean, you've already got her pregnant." Mike scowled at him and kicked him under the table. "Ow! Ass." Mike rolled his eyes.

"We don't want a very big wedding." El said, popping a fry in her mouth and leaning against Mike's side. "Just close friends and family."

"Our grandparents are going to come." Mike told Richie, who's eyes went wide.

"I have grandparents?" He nearly whispered. Mike blinked, and then made a face.

"Um, yeah? Mom's mom, we just call her Nana, and dad's dad, he goes by Grandpa Wheeler." Mike explained. "The ring was Pa's ring." Richie's eyes widened and he stared at the ring for a second, and then looked at Eddie.

"What?" He squeaked.

"Your mom didn't tell you?" Eddie asked. Richie shook his head.

"Pa wanted one of us to have it, when he died." Mike told him. Richie turned back to him. "At least that's what mom told me."

"I asked her for permission last week." Eddie said, blushing a little. "And I had the cheapest possible band that would probably break because of how rough you are with your hands." Richie wiggled his eyebrows. "Not like that, dipshit."

"Hey, there's a child here, you dips." El said, pointing at them. Mike snorted and Richie laughed. Eddie grinned, but continued.

"She went and got it for me and switched the rings out, explaining that your grandpa wanted you or Mike to have it, if you ever found your way back to them. Said that Mike didn't exactly like it, and she thought you'd love it."

"Well I do." He said softly. "Remind me to thank her." He said after a couple seconds. Then he looked at Mike, "Why don't you like it?" He put his hand in Mike's face and he barely flinched.

"Mike's not the flashy type." El responded for him. "He just wants a simple gold band."

"How are we even twins, we're like completely opposite."

"Nah." Mike said.

"Nah?"

"Nah. We're alike, you're just a lot more outgoing and shit than I am.

"That's a good thing, right?"

"Yeah." Mike snorted. He stood up. "Come with me for a second." He said.

"Are you gonna kill me?" Richie asked, tilting his head to the side. "Buttering me up then kill me?" Mike sighed and rolled his eyes.

"Thinking about it." He muttered. Richie snickered and pecked Eddie on the cheek before following his brother out the door. Eddie rolled his eyes and looked at El, who was trying to hide her grin with her hand.

"What?" He asked, making a face. She just grinned wider.

"Mike's asking him to be his best man." She told him. Eddie's eyes widened.

"Five bucks he's gonna cry." He said immediately. She laughed and they shook on it.

"You're kinda quiet today, dude, more so than usual." Richie said, leaning against the wall. "You good?"

"Uh, I wanted to ask you something, actually." Richie looked at him.

"Yeah?"

"Will you be my best man?" He asked quickly. Richie stared at him for a second.

"Best man?" He asked. Mike nodded, playing with the hem of his shirt. "Really?" Mike nodded again. "Why?"

"Why? You're my brother." Mike replied, as if it was obvious.

"But you could ask one of your friends." He said. "Will, Lucas, Dustin. Why me?"

"I love those guys like they're my brothers, Richie, but *you* are my brother. I'm gonna be honest, I was gonna ask dad to be the best man but…" He paused for a second, and continued, "I was going to ask you to be in the wedding anyways and… I *want* you to be my best man."

"But-"

"Quit with the but talk, I want you to be my best man, whether or not you think you should. But it's up to you." Richie didn't say anything for a couple seconds, he just looked the other way as if he saw something interesting, but in reality, he was trying to blink back tears.

"Uh," He coughed, glancing at Mike, "yeah. Yeah, I'll be your best man."

"Really?" Richie could hear the smile in his voice, so he looked at him and Mike was smiling almost as wide as he had on Saturday. Almost.

"Yeah." Mike let out a breathy laugh and threw his arms around Richie. Richie snorted and hugged him back, patting his shoulder. A couple minutes later, they walked back in.

"When's your appointment?" Eddie was asking.

"Friday." She replied. "I don't know if they'll do an ultrasound or not, but they probably will."

"I think when Nancy was pregnant with Nora they did one at the first appointment." Mike said, scratching his neck. "I hope they do one." She smiled at him. Then his eyes widened for a second.

"What?" El asked.

"Nora's birthday is tomorrow." He said. "How is she three already?" He pouted. Eddie snorted at that.

"She'll be going to school before you know it, then she'll be getting her first boyfriend- or girlfriend-"

"Nope, she can't have either." He said stubbornly.